

AN
ADDRESS
UPON
EDUCATION
AND
COMMON SCHOOLS,

DELIVERED AT

COOPERSTOWN, OTSEGO COUNTY, SEPT. 21,

AND REPEATED BY REQUEST, AT

JOHNSTOWN, FULTON COUNTY, OCT. 17, 1843.

BY JAMES HENRY, JUN.

SUPERINTENDENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS FOR THE COUNTY OF HERKIMER.

NEW YORK:
A. S. BARNES & CO.

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RECOMMENDATIONS.

Cherry-Valley, September 26, 1843.

YEAR SIR:—I need not say that I listened to your address on Popular Education, delivered at the Court-House in Cooperstown last Thursday evening, with high gratification. I trouble you with this note for the purpose of expressing my deep regret, that, when the numerous and respectable audience before whom it was delivered, by their resolution unanimously requested you to furnish a copy for publication, you intimated some hesitation and doubt of the propriety of granting that request. I am quite sure that the resolution was not adopted by the meeting, merely as a compliment to the Orator, but that it was elicited from a decided conviction that its publication would be extensively and permanently useful.

I assure you, my dear sir, that I have seldom heard or read a more excellent compendium of our Common School Laws than was contained in your address. You pointed out, distinctly and clearly, the duties of the various school officers; you also exhibited, in a manner able and lucid, the principles which ought to govern in the selection of Text Books, the qualifications which Teachers ought to possess, and the high duties they are required to perform, accompanied with an impressive and eloquent appeal to the public, and especially to the philanthropist, the patriot and the Christian, in behalf of those seminaries which you denominate with peculiar propriety, *THE PEOPLE'S SCHOOLS*.

I am fully aware of the ardent zeal with which you, for a long time, have indefatigably devoted yourself to improve and perfect these institutions; a zeal which has been, and which I trust will be hereafter attended with signal success; and I earnestly hope that you will furnish another evidence of your attachment to the great and good cause by giving to the public this address.

I am, with great respect, your obed't serv't,

To JAMES HENAY, Jun. Esq.

JABEZ D. HAMMOND.

Having heard a portion of Mr. Henry's address read, and being acquainted with his views on the subject of Common Schools, I cheerfully unite with the Hon. Mr. Hammond in expressing the hope that it may be given to the public.

ALONZO POTTER.

Union College, Nov. 7, 1843.

I have listened with great pleasure to the whole of Mr. Henry's address, and fully concur in the opinion expressed by Judge Hammond and Professor Potter, that it ought to be given to the public.

S. YOUNG

Ballston, Nov. 9, 1843.

A correspondent of the Massachusetts Common School Journal of January 15, 1844, says:—

"The Address, whose title has been given above, is so much superior to ordinary addresses, that think the attention of the people should be directed to it, by some notice in every periodical that aims to direct the public mind. I could without difficulty, make a long article of this notice, for there is hardly a paragraph in the Address that would not furnish a useful quotation, or a subject for thought and serious remark: but no such notice will be attempted, it being far better that those interested in the subject of the Address should procure it, and read it, and think it over, as a *whole*; as a connected view of what education, school books, teachers, should be; as an outline of the plan on which a mighty State is now conducting one of the most important works ever undertaken by any government, the instruction of every soul subject to its legislation."

As further evidence of the public estimation of the value of this Address, it may be remarked that of the two editions of 5,000 copies each, the former was sold before the work issued from the press, and the latter in a very few weeks after.

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BY THE AUTHOR
J. H. B. 1844

DEDICATION.

TO THE HON. SAMUEL YOUNG,

STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF COMMON SCHOOLS :

Sir—In dedicating the following address upon Education and Common Schools to you, I have no expectation that it will be in my power to attract still further to yourself public attention, or to deepen in one single particular the profound sense of obligation which is every where felt to you for the noble services which you have rendered the State as head of the Department of Public Instruction.

It will be the agreeable task of the future historian to declare to your fellow-countrymen, that you came into the administration of the Department in times of almost unequalled embarrassment; when an entirely new and untried organization had just been called into being; an organization admirable in its conception, but against which, for reasons assigned, you have frankly declared that you were strongly prepossessed; that you had the candor to examine that organization impartially, and the magnanimity publicly to avow that your first conception of it was wholly erroneous; that from the moment you discovered its true character, you embraced it with your whole soul, and breathed into every part of it a good portion of that invincible and virtuous energy for which you have been so long and so justly distinguished; that you have exerted with untiring assiduity all your ample and varied powers to perfect that organization in all its ramifications, and to provide adequate securities for the public moneys, which had been in but too many instances lost by the faithlessness of the agents to whom their keeping had been intrusted; in all of which you have been completely successful.

One service more and the crown of your glory is perfect. A portion of the community appear to have fallen into the sad and fatal misconception, that the Common School System is to become a part and parcel of ordinary party arrangements; and that its offices are to be bestowed as rewards of partisan exertions. A more lamentable error than this cannot take root in the minds of the citizens of this State, and if unchecked and uncorrected, this noblest and proudest monument of our wisdom and patriotism, will be prostrated in the dust. To you, sir, the eyes of all enlightened and virtuous citizens are now directed, with full hope and confident assurance that you possess both the ability and the will to point out this dangerous error to your fellow-citizens with the light, fervor and truth of the noon-day sun-beam—and to make such an irresistible appeal to the intelligence, virtue and patriotism of the State as will lead to its prompt and permanent correction. You, sir, can enunciate the grand fundamental truth in such a form, as to render practical in every portion of the State, that if there is in each town and each county of this State, one individual who is more deeply impressed with a conviction of the importance and necessity of a thorough and general system of instruction—one more profoundly versed in the philosophy of Education—one more ardently desirous to see the Common School System perfected, and one who will labor more efficiently and perseveringly for the attainment of that perfection than will any other person, no matter to what sect or party such a person may belong, it is the imperative duty of all men and all parties to see that he is appointed a school officer, and continued as such so long as he performs the duties of his office with fidelity.

With such confident hopes and high expectations, this address is now most respectfully inscribed to you by your humble, though sincere, friend,

ITS AUTHOR.

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AN ADDRESS, &c.

FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS :

We are this evening met for the purpose of contemplating for a short time, one of the most interesting subjects which can occupy our thoughts ; a subject which has been so long canvassed, that it is divested of every semblance of novelty, yet still a subject whose intrinsic importance has justly claimed the profound attention of the wisest and best of men in all the long ages of the past, and will claim similar attention of such men in all future time. Need I now add, that education, thorough, complete, universal education, is my theme ?

The term education is here used in its broadest and most comprehensive sense ; and in it I design to include all useful modes of training the human faculties, and every description of necessary knowledge, without which it is utterly impossible that a man can properly discharge his duties as an individual, as a member of society, and as a citizen of a free State.

Upon the importance of this subject, it would be a work of supererogation to dwell for a single moment ; and I pass at once to the consideration of the means by which this indispensable requisite of human happiness and human progress, may be made certain to every member of the community.

First, then, it must be apparent to all, that if the whole mass of the people is to be educated, nothing short of an enlightened and comprehensive system of common schools, can in any sense be adequate to the accomplishment of such a work. Private schools, excellent as they may be in themselves, and invaluable as they often are to individuals, never have, and in the very nature of the case, never can embrace the whole number of the people. That the people can be educated only in the people's schools, is a fundamental truth not yet sufficiently understood, though the unrivalled Common School system of New-York, gives cheering evidence that this truth is to some extent properly appreciated.

In the system of Common Schools, and in that only, the enlightened statesman sees stability and perpetuity for our free institutions ; in that

system, the political seer beholds the harbinger of a more glorious civilization; and in that system, Christian faith perceives the approach of that blessed era predicted by the prophets, in which "the nations shall learn war no more;" and entire humanity, enlightened by science and sanctified by religion, shall possess the whole earth, in order, harmony and peace.

The history of the Common School is a fit subject for the deepest philosophical research and the most accomplished pen, and it is ardently hoped that some writer, competent to do justice to so noble a theme, will soon enter upon this work; and wherever and whoever this writer may be, I would say to him, whether present utility or future glory be his object, there is no topic that can give greater assurance than this, that both purposes shall be attained.

Not to contemplate longer, things in promise or in prospect only, let us direct our attention to our Common School system as it now exists, since the latest enactments of the Legislature.

Experience had sometime since demonstrated, that our system of popular education, glorious and perfect as it is in principle, was nevertheless, in its practical details, in many respects, capitally defective. Its recent almost countless number of officers, extending literally to many thousands, and those officers, by the frequency of popular elections, in a vast majority of cases, giving place to successors before the duties of their offices could have been completely learned, much less thoroughly performed, necessarily precluded that perfect knowledge, unity and efficiency of action, so indispensable to the success of a department, acting upon so extensive a plan and comprehending within its sphere, such a countless and varied array of particulars. The consequence was, that after many years of laborious application, and the expenditure of vast sums of money on the part of the State and people, a majority of the community were but very imperfectly educated, while great numbers were left, almost as hopelessly beyond the pale of instruction as are the untaught savages of the western wilderness. All this too, while the department itself, could not, by any knowledge officially brought within its possession, determine whether it was accomplishing the object of its institution or proceeding in an opposite direction.

Various attempts to correct the errors which were seen and acknowledged upon all hands, were made, but without much success, until the law was enacted requiring the appointment of County Superintendents. This measure, like all experiments, was at first destined to en-

counter some opposition, but its effect has been such, that within the short time it has been in operation, the popular opinion has undergone nearly an entire revolution; and instead of being now looked upon as a measure of doubtful propriety, and therefore unpopular, it is almost universally regarded as one of the wisest and most salutary measures that ever emanated from a Legislative Assembly. Inexperienced as all these officers necessarily were at the time of their appointment, imperfect and inadequate as their first attempts to discharge their new and complicated duties in the very nature of things must be, the State Superintendent of Common Schools has publicly declared in his last annual report, that through the agency of County Superintendents, masses of the most useful and important facts, hitherto neglected, have been brought before the Department; facts, too, which will constitute the basis of future and extensive reforms.* Still the Department was, in its organization, too multifarious and complicated to secure the greatest practicable amount of good; and in conformity with the recommendations of the present judicious and able head of the Department, a vast reduction of the number of its officers was made by the last Legislature.

Instead of three Commissioners and two Inspectors of Common Schools, each town is now restricted to the choice of a single individual called a Town Superintendent, who is to perform all the duties heretofore requiring the concurrent action of five distinct, and sometimes conflicting agents. So great a reduction of the number of officers, while it will impose increased duties upon individuals, must simplify and render intelligent, to an extraordinary degree, the action of the Department.

Under its present organization, granting only that proper persons be selected to fill its offices, and that they faithfully perform their duties, the Department must necessarily be more intelligent, more efficient, more salutary, and therefore more popular, than it has ever before been.

To secure these desirable results, however, it will be necessary that Town, County and State Superintendents act in obedience to uniform rules, and in perfect harmony; harmony with each other, and in harmony with that all-pervading, all-controlling public opinion, which has long been, is now, and for ages to come, will, as we trust, be the supreme law of our land. The Superintendents must keep ever before them, the fact that they are the counsellors and servants, not the dictators and masters of the people. They will do well also, to bear constantly in mind, that sound republican maxim of the British Parliament, that however wise one man may be, the whole Parliament uni-

* See Appendix A.

ted, is wiser than he. But while due respect must ever be paid to popular opinion, it would be a base betrayal of a high public trust for any Superintendent to be guided solely by that opinion, without any effort on his part to enlighten and reform it, in all cases in which that opinion is known to be erroneous. Let no man be deceived on so vital a point as this. The people require the truth, and the whole truth, to be intelligently, clearly and respectfully spoken, on the part of all their public servants, in every department. No positive good can be attained, no permanent popularity acquired, by departing from fact and reality, in any instance whatever.

It will be remembered that, in our definition of education, we made the term to embrace the entire human being, physical, mental, and moral; individual, social, and political. To all these particulars, and in the order in which they have just been named, we will give a few moments' consideration.

The physical wants for which ample provision should be made in a judicious system of popular education, may be enumerated as follows: air, cleanliness, exercise, and the general convenience, health, and comfort of the body, in the various positions and attitudes which the pupils are required to assume in the execution of the orders of the school. All these are matters of high moment, though, hitherto with few rare exceptions, they have not received that attention which their importance requires. By the copious and various instructions, which were with great care and labor prepared by the late Superintendent, the Hon. John C. Spencer, and since adopted by Col. Young, which instructions should be ever-present to the mind of every person who is charged with the supervision of our schools, it will be seen that very minute observation and accurate description of a great number of particulars are required at his hands. There can be no really excellent schools, unless due attention be paid to school-houses. Their location, architecture, color, ventilation, internal arrangements, cleanliness, playgrounds, shade-trees, out-houses, fuel, &c. &c., must each and all receive due and patient consideration. The requisites of a good school-house and its appropriate apparatus, are a study worthy of a philosopher, and must ever be subjects of persevering investigation to every person studious to promote the welfare of the schools.

Having made all proper provisions for the health, exercise and comfort of the body, we must next provide a suitable apparatus for the development and discipline of the mind. Text-books for the use of the schools, will now be the principal subjects for our consideration.

To determine whether books are suitable to be used in the schools, we must first inquire whether the principles they contain are true, and the sentiments inculcated by them just; and, next, whether their lessons are arranged in conformity to the fundamental law of mental development. As this is a topic of great importance, and by reason of the conflicting views and interests of authors and publishers, necessarily encumbered by almost insuperable difficulties, I trust I shall be pardoned for dwelling upon it at considerable length.

If it be conceded, as I think it readily will be on all hands, that the human powers in their first exercises are weak and imperfect, and that they are invariably carried forward from weakness to strength, by slow and regular gradations, it must also be conceded that all proper text-books must be arranged in *strict* conformity to this universal law of mental progression. Such books must first present the elements of knowledge, next, the simplest combination of those elements; thus on, step by step, to the highest combinations, the lessons always increasing in difficulty in exact proportion to the learner's increase in ability. This general law has long been acknowledged by authors and compilers; but, while all have professed to know the law, few have practically obeyed it in the construction of their works. The public, however, ought rigorously to exact unqualified obedience to this law on the part of every writer of text-books for the use of the Common Schools. No matter what department of study an author may select for his labors, from simple to complex, by regular gradations, is the universal rule: philology begins with the alphabet, and mathematics commences with unity.

Text-books should, also, have something beyond correct arrangement of lessons to recommend them. Mere arrangement, though perfect as pure science itself, can never excuse the least impurity of thought, or the slightest indelicacy of language. If text-books contain aught that tends to pervert the taste or corrupt the morals of youth, they ought to be promptly excluded from the schools. Patriotism, or love of country, ought to be inculcated by the lessons read in our schools. If not known to all, it is, at least, to the observing, that the literature of every country reflects its institutions. This is a subject worthy of profound attention. The influence of popular literature is much greater than is generally imagined. A close observer of human affairs, once remarked, that, provided he could make the *songs*, he cared not who made the laws of a people. If we allow foreigners, the opponents of a republic, to form our minds as well as fashion our garments, is it not

reasonable to suppose that they will mould the former, as well as shape the latter, after their own peculiar models. It has been well said, in reference to ours and the mother country, that "dependance can never cease, if one nation is always to teach and the other always to learn. If we can only be wise when they are wise, we must also be foolish if they are foolish, dote when they dote, and die when they die."

The convenience of the pupil, and the pecuniary interest of the parent or guardian, require that text-books, in almost every department of study, should be written in regular successive numbers; and the judicious and orderly construction of books upon such a plan renders it very important that these successive numbers should proceed from the same hand. This truth is also generally recognised, and many series, by different authors, have been placed before the public. It is believed that very few, if any of these series, possess every desirable requisite; yet that some of them approximate much nearer to proper standard works than do others, is a truth that will at once present itself to every person who is at all conversant with the powers and operations of the human mind. It should be the constant aim, and imperative duty of all persons, charged with the selection and recommendation of text books for the use of the Common Schools, always to fix upon the highest standards of excellence in the different departments of study.

The most important book, and usually the first one in which children are taught in the Common Schools, is the Spelling-Book. A good work of this kind ought, among others, to possess the following requisites: First, it should embrace the elements of the language, arranged in a scientific order. Second, it should include the words of most common use in the language. There is a great number of words in all languages, which may be compared to small change in the monetary system: the cent, five-cent, ten-cent, quarter, half-dollar and dollar coins, are wanted every day and every hour, while the larger denominations are seldom used. So in language; there are certain words which must be used every day and every hour; words, without the use of which, it is hardly possible to form a single sentence. Every Spelling-Book ought to contain this class of perpetually recurring words. Third, a good Spelling-Book will contain a correct classification of words. Words should be classed according to the sounds of the letters and combinations of letters of which they are composed. Whoever has examined our language with attention, need not be told that its orthography abounds in anomalies. A letter and a union of letters have not unfrequently three or more distinct sounds; thus, *ou* in one

place sounds like *ow*, as in *thou*; in another. like *oo*, as in *tour*; and, in a third like *u* short, as in *rough*. There are hundreds of similar anomalies: they are imperfections inseparable from the language, at least such is the common opinion, and all that can be done to obviate the difficulties and perplexities of the learner, necessarily arising from these anomalies, is to give them a correct classification; that is, to bring together in one table or column, and under proper marks of notation, words in which letters and combinations have one sound; and in another table or column, those words in which they have a different sound. Fourth, a Spelling-Book should be a perfect transcript from the Dictionary which accompanies it, so that if any doubt arises respecting the spelling or pronunciation of a word, that doubt may be immediately removed by referring to the Dictionary.

The New-York State Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, by whose patient and persevering examination of text books the cause of education has been greatly benefited, have arrived at the conclusion that of the one hundred and twenty Spelling-Books extant, purporting to exhibit a correct arrangement of the elements of our language, two only make any near approaches to proper standard works. Probably no work of this kind now before the public, is more generally correct than Cobb's New Spelling Book.

Of the three hundred and fifty Grammars of our language, one hundred and sixty-four English, one hundred and eighty-six American, the examining committee of that society are of opinion that three only, one British and two American, can be properly regarded as approximations to standard works. Of the American Grammars, Brown's and Bullions' are generally regarded as the most correct and valuable. Bullions' being the latest, and forming one number of a grammatical series, embracing the Greek, Latin and English languages, is deemed by many persons, whose judgment and acquirements are entitled to high consideration, the best work of its kind.

Of all studies, grammar, properly understood, is the most important. It is language which opens to us the treasures of the past—it is language which makes known to us the progress of the present, and by language only, can we address the future. It is language which has placed man at the head of all earthly intelligences; and without this, he would soon sink to the level of the brutal herd. Let none be repelled from this most useful study by the scholastic nonsense and technical jargon with which this noble science has been too long encumbered. Let it be always remembered, that the principles of language,

like those of every other department of knowledge, have been fixed by the Creator himself; and, like those laws, are characterized and recommended by a divine simplicity and perfect order that render a knowledge of them easily accessible to every person to the extent that his duty requires their use.

A dissertation upon grammar would not be in accordance with the expectations of the present occasion, and I take leave of this topic, with the expression of my full confidence, that when our present grammatical babel has been fully and freely subjected to the correcting and reforming action of the philosophical mind, the same patient induction and rigid analysis which translated from the mists and mazes of alchemy the exact science of chemistry, will, in due time, present us with a simple, harmonious and exact system of grammar, which will enable the student readily to master the construction of his native tongue, and to wield that tongue with energy and precision.

In the department of arithmetic and mathematics, the works of Professor Davies, of the United States Military Academy, at West Point, extending by regular and scientific gradations from the elements of arithmetical calculation to the highest department of pure mathematics, are probably unsurpassed by anything of their kind which has appeared in this or any other country. It is a very general opinion among the most competent judges that these works are better calculated to advance the student in his progress, and to give him a regular, connected and intelligent mastery of this important department of science than any other works now before the public. The series embraces several separate volumes, each forming, as far as it extends, a complete treatise in itself. These works are eminently entitled to the attentive consideration of all persons who are duly impressed with the importance and necessity of fixing upon uniform standard text-books for the Common Schools. I trust the day is not far distant in which these works will be found in all the schools in this State and in the Union. Should any persons desire a more extended common school course than is contained in the First Lessons and Common School Arithmetic, Mr. Perkins' Higher Arithmetic is happily adapted to be connected with them, and when so united, they would form a series that would, as it appears to me, leave little further to be added, or even desired. It is not by authority, by recommendation and puffing, that books can be much longer sustained before the public. The time is near when all works will be tested by the severest scrutiny and most rigid analysis, and whenever

and wherever books are so tried, I venture the prediction that there will be a unanimous verdict in favor of Professor Davies' works.

In the Geographical department there are great numbers of text-books, and many of them works of decided merit; but I think Mitchell's extensive and apparently perfect series, is justly entitled to preference over all its numerous competitors. This series, extending from the rudiments, and embracing in its ample course his numerous and incomparable outline maps, seems to leave but a single further wish in relation to this most useful and interesting department of study; and that wish is, that these works may, as soon as may be practicable, be placed in all the Common Schools.

Mitchell's Outline Maps are, in my judgment, by far the most valuable of the apparatus which has yet been prepared for the use of the schools. The proprietor of these maps is now getting them up in two divisions, so that a half set may be purchased by the smallest districts; and by this arrangement, in two years only, complete sets may be procured for all the schools in the State.

While upon the subject of apparatus, I will respectfully call your attention to a map showing chemical composition of all the metals, prepared by Dr. James Hadley, M. D., then Chemical Professor in the Western College of Physicians at Fairfield, in the county of Herkimer. I regard this as a very valuable work, and it might be placed in all the schools at an expense merely nominal.

In the department of reading and elocution there are more text-books than in any other, many of them good works too; but I think the course of Lyman Cobb, A. M., since his latest revision, is superior to that of any other author, for giving pupils critical accuracy in the use of their language; and as this is the principal object of text-books, it appears to me that this consideration alone is amply sufficient for giving to these works a preference over any of their numerous competitors. This course embraces Juvenile Readers numbers one, two and three, a sequel to Juvenile Readers and Cobb's North American Reader. Other books may possess some desirable requisites in a higher degree than do these works, but as a whole, I am of decided opinion that a great majority of competent judges would decide in favor of Cobb's books.

Porter's Rhetorical Reader contains the best explanation and illustration of the principles of good reading that I have ever seen, and I respectfully recommend to both Town and County Superintendents, to make this Reader their text-book in the examination of teachers in this

department. It is a work which might be studied and read with signal advantage by both teachers and pupils in all the Common Schools.

Hale's Premium History is a work of extended and deserved popularity. Perhaps no better compendium of the history of the United States, has yet been written ; and its solid merit will probably long retain for it what it now enjoys, a prominent place in all the schools of the country.

As a book of reading exercises, however, Mrs. Emma Willard's Abridgment of her History of the United States, is greatly superior to Hale's work, while her geographical, chronological and statistical facts are stated with great accuracy and clearness. How so dry a subject can be invested with all the charms of works of the imagination while the thread of historical facts is never broken, the History of Mrs. Willard can alone explain. Both Mrs. Willard's History and its Abridgment are works of unrivalled merit, and it is hoped that the Abridgment will be generally read by classes in the schools, and her larger work procured for all the District Libraries.

Palmer's Moral Instructor, in four parts, is a work which has been recently prepared by its able author, and is designed to develop and bring into virtuous activity the moral principles. Such a work appears to be eminently needed, and this author has accurately conceived his subject, and clothed his views in a style which will be forever attractive to juvenile learners. The reputation of the author of the prize essay upon education is fully sustained in this, his latest work.

Wedgewood's Revised Statutes of the State of New-York appears to be a valuable publication. This little manual, in the form of questions and answers, will constitute an excellent preparatory exercise to a more extended course of reading or studying the constitution and laws of the State, subjects with which every voter to a certain extent ought to have a practical acquaintance.

Peter Parley's extensive works, including his Histories and Magazine for juvenile learners, deserve the attentive and candid examination of parents, teachers, and the friends of education generally. They are, probably, as well calculated to interest children and youth, and thus produce a taste for reading, as any books of their kind that have yet issued from the press ; while the knowledge they impart is generally of a useful and practical character, and their moral tendency, so far as I have observed it, is without exception good. These works may be used with advantage in both the Common Schools and District Libraries.

The book that is most eminently needed in our Common Schools, and of which they are now almost universally destitute, is a suitable Dictionary of our language. The quarto and octavo editions of Webster are too bulky and expensive for common use, while his small work is so much abridged, both in the number of its words and their definitions, that it is of comparatively little value to the student. The book of this description, which I think would be most useful in the Common Schools and in families, is Worcester's Comprehensive Dictionary. This book contains a great variety of necessary information, not to be found in any other work of its kind, besides a more numerous catalogue of words and more extensive definitions, than are to be found in any other book of its price with which I am acquainted. This Dictionary is recommended for the use of the Common Schools in Massachusetts, and of its merits, the accomplished Secretary of the Board of Education in that State, expresses himself in the following manner: "IT IS THE BEST DICTIONARY EXTANT FOR SCHOOLS."

The department of penmanship has hitherto been very much neglected. Seldom indeed do we find any teacher, male or female, who possesses competent skill to instruct in this most useful art. The works which have been published upon this subject, so far as I have been acquainted with them, have not in most instances appeared to me to be well adapted to supply the deficiencies of teachers. I am of opinion that Root's System of Philosophical Penmanship is one of the best works of its kind. It appears to be more perfectly adapted to the fundamental principle of progressive development than any other work with which I am acquainted. I hope its merits will be fairly tested by actual experiment, and when so tried, I doubt not that it will be found a scientific and valuable work. Writing is almost purely a mechanical art, and may, without doubt, be generally taught with far greater success than it has heretofore been.

Here, in conformity to usage, by far too general, the course of studies pursued in the Common Schools, has been closed. Reading, Writing, Grammar, Geography and Arithmetic, and these elementary branches, in most cases but very imperfectly and inadequately taught, have long constituted the whole circle of arts and sciences, taught in the people's schools. May it not be reasonably hoped, in this reforming age, that this meager catalogue will be liberally extended? May not Book-keeping, the elements of Anatomy and Physiology, Natural and Moral Philosophy, Chemistry, Agriculture, Mechanics, Political Economy, Drawing, Architecture and Music, be included in the prescribed

course of Common School studies? The question has been already, in numerous instances, affirmatively and successfully answered, and it is ardently hoped and confidently expected, that at no distant day, instruction will be given in all these departments of science, together with their kindred branches, and that, too, in the Common Schools.*

Before taking leave of this subject, allow me to call your attention to the importance of having uniform text-books. That the present endless variety of these works is one of the greatest evils connected with the Common Schools, the cause of unnecessary expense to parents, needless labor and perplexity to teachers, and of great delay and discouragement to the learners, is the unanimous opinion of all persons who have fairly examined this matter. But while the magnitude of the evil is obvious, its remedy is not so apparent. If the introduction of text-books is left, solely, in the hands of authors and publishers, this evil will always exist; and yet every attempt on the part of the public to remove it, without due respect to the interest of the *trade*, will, in all human probability, prove utterly unsuccessful.

If any method can be devised by which the pursuit of private interest can be made to promote the public good, we may then reasonably expect that this great evil will, in due time, be removed. I am of opinion that such a method may be devised; indeed, measures have been already adopted in many places, to secure the uniformity which all admit to be so desirable and necessary.

Let teachers and all other persons interested in the welfare and progress of the Common Schools, thoroughly and impartially examine and compare the text-books now in most common use; and let the real merits of each work be fairly stated; let the object of the examination be to ascertain the truth, and not to bias public opinion in favor of, or against particular works—and a surprising coincidence and harmony of views will soon be developed, which will speedily open the way for effecting all desirable changes. Let these examinations be first made, in all instances, in town associations; let the works recommended by the towns, be re-examined in the county associations, and let the results of the county examinations be embodied and afterwards reviewed by the State Convention of County Superintendents; and lastly, let their proceedings be thoroughly canvassed by the State Superintendent. By such an arrangement, the merits of books would be ascertained, public opinion harmonized and concentrated, the imperfect works now in the schools, whenever new purchases became necessary, would give

* Appendix B.

place to those approved by the public, and in a few years uniform books in the towns, counties and State would be secured, and the whole reformation accomplished, without injustice to authors or prejudice to booksellers. By such means, the best works would be placed in all the schools, while the aggregate expense for books would be reduced at least one-third.

Thus, far, we have restricted our views to physical and mental wants, and to provisions for their supply; but capitally and fatally defective will all systems of education be found that do not arouse and bring into virtuous activity the moral principles of our nature. An individual may possess perfect physical and mental faculties, and these may be trained and disciplined to the highest possible degree; yet, if his moral faculties are neglected, he will be miserable in himself, and a scourge and curse upon community. Characters of this description are too common in history to render the designation of individual instances necessary. It has been the great error of all preceding times; and it is, in fact, the most alarming indication of the present age, to overestimate mental, and to underrate moral excellence. This fact will explain why, in the history of the world, we meet with so many Alexanders, so many Cesars, but so few Washingtons. It is to the action of intellect, uncontrolled by moral principle, that we are to attribute nearly all the social and political evils which have ever existed in the world. It was to this cause, more than to all others, that we owe the pressure and embarrassments of the trying period through which we have recently passed. To correct, then, this palpable, this bold defiance of the Creator's moral laws, is the imperious duty of the men of our times. Our Common Schools must not only teach the truths of science; they must also explain the principles and enforce the practice of sound morality.

If the sphere of the Common Schools is so extensive; if these institutions are designed to make our children practically acquainted with the physical, mental and moral laws of their being; to impart a thorough knowledge of individual, social and political duties; to illuminate the mind, correct the taste, and form the manners; to inspire the soul with unconquerable aversion to all that is low, grovelling, dishonorable, and depraved; to awaken in it perpetual aspirations after all that is useful, great, glorious and good; in one word, to form their whole character upon such a model as will fit them to fill with honor to themselves and with advantage to their country, any and every station in which duty shall require them to act; is it not apparent, obvious, pal-

pable to all, that none but accomplished and experienced masters can perform a work like this? Yet, in practice, how strangely have we lost sight of this self-evident truth? How often have we placed our Common Schools in charge of persons, so unlike competent masters, that they were ignorant of the very elements of their duty. Such an error was too glaring in itself, too fatal in its effects, to remain long unobserved. It is now every where seen, felt, and acknowledged, and laudable attempts to correct it have already been made.

To secure that high grade of qualifications, literary, scientific and educational, so indispensably necessary to the success of the Common Schools, it was, sometime since, perceived that some legal provision for the education and thorough preparation of teachers must be made. Teachers' Departments, in sixteen academies, two in each Senatorial District, were established; these departments have been tested by several years' experience, and, while they have been productive of much good, it was nevertheless believed that a greater good would be attained by concentrating the funds, and more amply endowing a smaller number of institutions. In conformity, therefore, with this opinion, the Regents of the University propose to designate four academies, which are hereafter to receive the funds that have hitherto been distributed among the sixteen academies under the provisions of the former law. In the four academies which the Regents may designate, it is expected that the education of Common School Teachers will become the principal business.

This alteration will, no doubt, be found, in practice, a great improvement upon the former system. Still, it must be apparent to all, that some farther provisions must be made before all our schools can be supplied with properly qualified teachers. In some counties, teachers' classes have been formed in the academies; in others, temporary normal schools have been opened, both of which will have a direct tendency to elevate the character of the Common School Teachers, and should, therefore, be countenanced and encouraged by the active co-operation of all the friends of popular education.

Our present law, by instituting three grades of qualification in the teacher's profession, has nearly assimilated it to the other professions, and has opened a fair way to a young gentleman or a young lady, for securing a competence and a respectable position in society, without abandoning this most useful and important of all the departments of honorable labor. Let no town or county certificate of qualifications be granted, until after thorough and impartial examination of the appli-

cants, and the exemplification of the most indubitable testimonials of good moral character. I would respectfully suggest the propriety of having applications, in all cases, first made to Town Superintendents: that county licenses shall, hereafter, be granted only to persons of superior literary and scientific attainments, and who possess more than ordinary aptitude in the business of instruction, and great talent in the government and general management of a school.

State certificates are granted upon the recommendation of County Superintendents; they are intended to be evidence of the highest order of educational talent, and very superior scientific and literary attainments. Great caution and vigilance ought to be exercised in making recommendations of candidates for State Licenses, or the noble aim of the law will be defeated. I would respectfully recommend the formation of a board of examiners, to consist of any given number of the most competent friends of education in each county, whose duty it shall be to act in concert with the County Superintendent, whenever candidates for State certificates are to be examined:

For the purpose of affording the Superintendent of Common Schools the means of constant and regular communication with all the various school officers throughout the State, and also for the purpose of keeping the inhabitants of school districts informed of all the best and most practicable plans for the improvement of the schools, the State, by its liberal and judicious subscription for the District School Journal, has established upon a permanent foundation, one of the most popular and useful educational journals of the present times. This paper is the regular organ of the Department; in it are published all the laws relating to the Common Schools, with their expositions, and the decisions of the State Superintendent. Most of the improvements and discoveries in educational science, both in Europe and America, are also published in the Journal, while its columns are still farther enriched by the discussion of many of the most interesting topics connected with popular education, by some of the most intelligent and able writers of the day. To give greater attraction and usefulness to the Journal, the editor has recently commenced the publication of a valuable and interesting Miscellany for youth, which cannot prove otherwise than profitable and entertaining to a vast number of juvenile readers. This Miscellany, it is hoped, will be read by the higher classes in the schools, in the same way that the miscellany of the Massachusetts Common School Journal is read in the schools of that ancient and venerable commonwealth. Every school officer, every school teacher and

every family throughout the State, ought to take at least one copy each of this invaluable paper. Twelve numbers a year, on fine paper, fair type, and sixteen double column octavo pages each, are afforded for the trifling expense of fifty cents. One copy of the Journal for each school district, is paid for by the State and forwarded by mail. Trustees are by law required to pay the postage on these papers, take them from the office, preserve them, and, at the end of each year, to have them neatly and substantially bound, and placed in the District Library.

While upon the subject of educational papers, I should do injustice to the cause of education, were I to omit to mention the Massachusetts Common School Journal, conducted by that distinguished and accomplished advocate of the Common Schools, the Hon. Horace Mann. It appears to me that the volumes of this paper are well deserving of a place in the District Libraries of this State. A more varied, rich and instructive educational journal, I have never read; nor one better calculated to exert a permanent and salutary influence on behalf of the Common Schools. It appears to me, that the friends of popular education owe it to the noble cause they have espoused, to themselves, and especially to its able, devoted, and indefatigable editor, to give this paper the widest possible circulation.

The Northern Light is another journal principally devoted to science, literature, and the dissemination of useful knowledge. It is conducted by an association of gentlemen, of distinguished ability and high attainments, and its influence is eminently salutary in forming a correct taste, and in the elevation of the character of the press. This paper is the organ of the Young Men's State Association, an invaluable institution, which has done much good service, and rendered efficient aid in the great educational efforts of our times. I cordially recommend the Northern Light to the favorable consideration of all friends of education, sincerely believing that they will always find it an able and worthy co-operator in the great and patriotic work in which they are so nobly engaged.

While acknowledging the value of the services rendered by those papers which are generally or exclusively devoted to scientific, literary and educational purposes, the obligations of the friends of education to the press at large, ought always to be remembered. Upon the great interest of popular education, political editors, to their everlasting honor be it spoken, have acted as patriots and philanthropists; they have nobly risen above all party prejudice and bias, and have cordially

united, and energetically advocated that great cause, without which independence, liberty and free institutions, are empty and unmeaning sounds.

I will take this opportunity, respectfully and earnestly to invite the careful attention of parents, teachers, school officers, and the friends of education at large, to that most excellent work, the *School and School-Master*, a joint production of Professor Potter of Union College, and George B. Emerson, Esq., of Boston; two of the most competent, devoted, practical, and successful educators of our times. A work better calculated to awaken and arouse the true educational spirit, and, at the same time, to guide that spirit into right modes of action, cannot be easily conceived. Were this admirable book the only aid which its distinguished authors had rendered the cause of education, they would be amply entitled to the honors of public benefactors. By the enlightened and patriotic liberality of two other distinguished friends of popular education, James Wadsworth, Esq., of New-York, and the Hon. Martin Brimmer, of Massachusetts, a copy of the *School and School-Master* has been presented to each Common School district in both of those States. Its authors have nobly indicated a field in which men of the most eminent talents, science and erudition may exert themselves for the benefit of our country; while its munificent patrons have set an example of beneficent employment of wealth, which, it is ardently hoped, other gentlemen of fortune will not be slow to imitate.

The crowning glory of our whole Common School system, is the institution of District Libraries. The man who was the originator of this magnificent scheme, has secured for his name and memory an enviable immortality; and the Legislators who gave to it a legal existence and practical effect, will be honored as public benefactors to the latest posterity. These institutions are designed to carry onward and complete the process which is but commenced in the Schools. The Schools are intended to teach children and youth the art of acquiring useful knowledge; the Libraries are designed to afford them the means of reducing that art to practice. None but standard works, in the different departments of knowledge, ought ever to be admitted into the District Libraries. It is not from the great number, but from the high quality of the volumes, that the vast benefits expected from these institutions are to flow. If, during the period of the State's patronage, none but works of the first character are obtained, the increased knowledge and ability which will every where surround these precious de-

positories, will carry onward and complete the beginnings which have been thus auspiciously made. Nobler foundations for the intellectual and moral culture of a whole people, were never laid by any State ancient or modern. From these generous fountains, provided, only, they shall be always kept pure, will hereafter issue copious streams of healthful knowledge, which will in due time produce an ennobling social and political regeneration. Let the good seed be sown with a generous broadcast throughout the entire length and breadth of the State, and, though our eyes may behold only the *promise* of the glorious harvest, we may rest in undoubting assurance that our children will possess its full fruition. May we be duly impressed with the magnitude and value of the trust which is committed to our keeping in the District Libraries; and let us ever preserve these sacred treasures of knowledge from all desecration, with the same vigilance and energy with which we would protect and defend the citadels of liberty, and the altars of religion.

The legal organization of our Common School system, has been pronounced by competent judges far in advance of that of any other State in the Union; but to give to its action that unity, efficiency and success so desirable, the enlightened and judicious provisions of the law must be sustained and enforced by cordial and constant individual and social effort. Associations, both town and county, ought to be immediately formed to devise, promote and sustain all further necessary and useful measures for the advancement of education, which has been truly pronounced the cause of human progress. Town associations would be composed of the Town Superintendent, all the teachers of the Common Schools, and such other active friends of reform as would of choice unite with them. These associations would meet monthly, or semi-monthly, on Saturday afternoon, or on any other day that might be more convenient. At these meetings, reports on the character of text-books and essays upon various subjects would be read; discussions upon the different modes of teaching and the best way of governing and managing schools, would be held. Such meetings, properly conducted, would excite a deep public interest, which would make them more and more valuable each succeeding year; and both parents and teachers would be thereby better prepared to discharge successfully the important duty of educating children and youth.*

The formation of a County Education Society, which should hold,

* Appendix C, 1.

at least, one meeting in each year, would be a measure of great importance. At the annual meeting of this society, an address, by some distinguished friend of education would be made, reports from town associations would be read, and general measures for further improvement would be discussed. Town and County Superintendents, by virtue of their offices, might be members of such a society, and they, together with principals of academies, teachers of common schools, and such other friends as would of choice unite with them, would at all times form a society respectable in numbers, judicious in counsel, efficient in action, and glorious in its entire consecration to the promotion of the greatest and noblest of all human enterprises.*

To perfect our system of popular education, all rivalry and opposition between Common Schools, Academies, Colleges and Universities, must be removed. These different institutions, different in grade only, ought all to be devoted to the one grand purpose of thoroughly educating the children and youth of the State: they must, therefore, act in perfect harmony, for

"All are but parts of one stupendous whole."

This desirable harmony might be produced by assigning to each institution its appropriate part in the process of educating. The comprehensive plan of popular education which Mr. Jefferson, more than sixty years ago, recommended to the people of Virginia, is the only one which will fully satisfy the desires and hopes of the statesman, philosopher and patriot. The system of Mr. Jefferson, commenced with the primary school and thence passed onward, by regular gradations, through higher institutions to the University. The schools, according to Mr. Jefferson's plan, to the extent of giving every child a thorough English education, were to be absolutely free to all. If any person wished his child or ward to pass beyond this, he was to pay the tuition of that child from his own means. Mr. Jefferson further proposed, that such rare geniuses as this plan would necessarily develop among the destitute poor, and whose services in the higher departments of science would be highly valuable to the commonwealth, should, at the cost of the State, be passed on to and through the University. This is the most perfect and magnificent system of education ever devised for a free people, and its conception and partial execution alone, would forever justly designate Mr. Jefferson as the profoundest statesman and philosopher of his age. Such will our system be, when the outline

which we have already so nobly sketched, shall be entirely filled up and completed.

A system of education such as this, embracing each child of the republic, would draw out every latent resource, develop and bring into vigorous and harmonious action all the dormant energies of the people: it would exhibit to the world, the sublime spectacle of the genius of Napoleon, again returned to earth, achieving new victories and new glories upon the fields of peace. On a spectacle such as this, the sun has never yet shone; on such a spectacle, the sun of this century *will* shine, if the people of our times and of succeeding generations, shall prove faithful to the high mission to which they are emphatically and imperatively called.

Fellow-Superintendents, an enlightened, a generous, patriotic and confiding people have invested us with a power far transcending in delicacy and importance, that of ordinary legislation. That virtuous and watchful jealousy of government, which is always found in a real republic, permits the legislator to touch the liberty and property of the citizen only by means of well defined and cautiously guarded general laws; while unto us have been committed the supervision and direction of both public teachers and public schools, thus giving us a controlling influence over the mind-forming apparatus by which we may stamp impressions on the very souls of the whole rising generation which will powerfully affect it, for evil or for good throughout the whole period of its existence: nay, farther, our action will affect in like manner, though in less degree, many succeeding generations. Well may we be humbled before the magnitude of such a trust; most reasonably may we ask ourselves, with the utmost intensity of our souls, are we worthy to receive such a charge? Are we competent to the performance of the duties it imposes?

Our mission is that of reformers: as such we must always remember that by gentleness, kindness, perseverance, charity, addressing ourselves to the reason and affections, and carefully avoiding to shock too violently even the prejudices of the people, we shall best secure a permanent popularity, and lay a broad foundation for lasting usefulness. In the wise order of the universe, all violence is of short duration. The names of Alexander and Cesar now serve only "to point a moral or adorn a tale," notwithstanding each of those individuals once ruled the world by the power of the sword.

In the execution of the duties of our office, we must always act the genuine republican, while the political partisan must never appear;

and while we forever leave in utter forgetfulness and oblivion, all sectarian feeling and technical theology, our whole course ought to be animated by the hopes, and guided by the principles of the Gospel. So feeling and so acting, a high career of usefulness is now opened before us. Let us publicly, upon the altars of our country, pledge ourselves to fidelity in the performance of our duties, and provided we shall redeem this pledge, the applause of our fellow-citizens, the testimony of a good conscience, and the approbation of Heaven shall be our reward.

It may not be inappropriate to the occasion to notice briefly the indications of the times for the purpose of animating the hopes and renewing and sustaining the efforts of the friends of popular education. Even a good cause is sometimes as much advanced by strong promises of success, as by its inherent right and excellence. It is right and proper, therefore, nay, it is the duty of all advocates of education, to present fairly and truly, and in a strong light, all facts and observations which are calculated to arouse and fix the attention, and gather around the standard of education as much of the talent, virtue and wealth of the community as possible.

Though self-love, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, is not regarded as the highest motive of action, all will readily admit that its general influence upon men is second to that of no other. Mankind will always be found pursuing that course which they conceive to be productive of the greatest good to themselves. If, therefore, human welfare is ever in proportion to the number and harmony of the faculties excited to action, it follows as a self-evident proposition, that the happiness of every person will be denominated and measured by his education. Who does not desire sound health? Who would not have an enlightened mind? Who, above all things, would not possess an honest heart? These inestimable blessings, and innumerable others, are to a very great extent, the natural results of right education.

The love of gain is another powerful instinct or propensity of human nature; and provided you can show men a course of conduct that will result in the greatest increase of wealth, you may reckon with certainty upon their adoption and persevering pursuit of that course. That the wealth of every community is indicated by its intelligence, industry and economy is a truth which will be found upon every page of human history. Were the acquisition of riches the sole object of our pursuit, we should much sooner attain it by developing and bringing into action the powers of the mind, than by draining the gold and

silver veins of the Andes. The names of Faust, Arkright, Watt, Fulton and Whitney, not to mention others, will at once tell how the wealth of whole nations has been augmented by the action of individual minds.

The innumerable societies which, within the last quarter of a century have sprung up in all parts of the country—Agricultural Societies, Mechanics' Associations, Lyceums, Young Men's Associations, &c., are all indubitable proofs of the fact, that vast masses, in every department of life, have discovered that their true interest and well being, are most certainly and best promoted by developing and disciplining their own faculties, and bringing into greater activity their mental powers.

The farmer has learned that a knowledge of geology, chemistry, zoology, in a word, natural philosophy, in all its branches, is eminently useful, not to say indispensably necessary, to the successful prosecution of farming, the primary, most important and most noble department of virtuous industry. From the time the mechanic first substituted the purling brook and wheel for the foot-lathe, he has known that though his hand must always be employed, the grand reservoir of his power, the most certain element of his success, will ever be found in his head. The farmer and mechanic, therefore, have ever been and ever will be numbered among the firmest and most active friends of popular education and Common Schools.

The embarrassment and pressure of the times are favorable to popular education. This may to some, appear paradoxical, but I think a few moments attention to facts will make this assertion plain to all. In that hollow and unsubstantial prosperity which sprung out of a false credit system, the seeming favorites of fortune began seriously to believe that they were of nobler origin, and of higher race, than the common masses of humanity; they, therefore, filled our country with private schools and misnamed academies, for the education of their favored children, while the Common Schools, and the equally deserving children of honest manual labor were neglected and uncared for. The complete bursting and utter annihilation of the bubble has restored thousands upon thousands to their sober senses again, and they now perceive that their true interest, no less than their country's, requires them to place able and accomplished teachers in the Common Schools, and to return their children once more to those institutions, from which they ought never to have been withdrawn.

The pressure of the times, also, has opened to the minds of all, the truth, that next to absolute crime, a state of perpetual indebtedness is, of all human conditions, the most humiliating and deplorable. It is now, at least to some extent, perceived that the "credit system," as we have formerly practised it, is incompatible with republican institutions, and that we have indeed to make, as Mr. Jefferson long since taught us, "our election between economy and liberty, or profusion and servitude." Industry, economy and frugality must again become household virtues, and in our families and schools must all our children be taught that the only real philosopher's stone, which turns all things into gold, is to PAY AS YOU GO. There is a momentous truth of the deepest significancy, in the scriptural injunction, OWE NO MAN ANY THING.*

Our government is not only favorable to education, but its fundamental principle, the sovereignty of the people, absolutely requires that every citizen should be well taught in all principles of his duty. A more important truth for a republic, was never uttered by human tongue, than that which John Quincy Adams proclaimed, when he declared that the "*people, correctly informed, will always do right.*" Correct information is the indispensable condition of right action. It is then, and then only, that it can with truth be said, "*The voice of the people is the voice of God.*" By our constitutions we have given civil omnipotence to the ballot boxes; by our laws we must now give sound education to every voter, or the grand experiment of popular suffrage and free institutions, around which the brightest and holiest hopes of humanity have clustered, will result in the utter and hopeless destruction of the republic. The only impregnable fortress of popular liberty is the Common School System: without this all our other armaments and munitions will be vain; with this, a generous, patriotic people will be forever invincible. This truth has been long known and acted upon by many of our virtuous and enlightened statesmen, but the conviction of its momentous importance has now become so general that *universal education and universal suffrage* are proclaimed by national parties as their motto, and are put forth even now by the federal government, under which we live as cardinal and fundamental principles of its political faith.

Many of the ripest scholars of our country, the men at the head of the philosophy and literature of our day, are now deeply engaged with their voices and with their pens, in maturing, directing, defending and

making popular the grand scheme of developing and bringing into virtuous activity all the latent principles and dormant energies of the people. Eminent and commanding is the position which these men occupy, and they are nobly evincing to the world that they comprehend the truth, that to inform the ignorant, reclaim the vicious, arouse the indifferent, and to quicken all into a prompt performance of every duty, are the end and object of all true science, literature and philosophy.

Most auspicious and encouraging too, is the fact that at the present time a corps of Common School masters, of far higher qualifications, juster appreciation of the duties and responsibilities of teachers, and of more elevated character generally, is now organizing in every county of the State. Pursuing for a few years to come, the noble course of two years past, and the majority of our Common Schools will be in charge of really competent teachers. Here is a field in which philanthropy and patriotism may exert themselves to the greatest extent ; and it is heart-cheering to the friends of popular education to see so great a number of virtuous and competent young men enrolling their names on the lists of the Teacher's Profession, and conscientiously and ardently devoting themselves to the arduous, yet glorious work of gravating upon the tender and impressible minds of children and youth, the eternal and unchangeable principles of truth and duty, and forming them by their own constant and bright example, to the love and practice of all that is useful, pure and ennobling in human conduct.

Not only have the farmer, mechanic, scholar, statesman, philosopher and patriot enrolled themselves under the banner of educational reform, but woman, with all her inherent beauty and loveliness, with her innate shrewdness, aptness, patience, hopefulness, perseverance and irresistible power, has with a devotion and ardor which none but herself can feel or know, espoused this noble cause and rendered it such good service, as none but woman can render. Not only as a mother does she indelibly impress upon the tender infant mind the love and practice of the true, the beautiful, the great, the glorious, and the good, but as a teacher she has entered the once unattractive, not to say repulsive school-house, and its whole aspect has been changed as with the wand of an enchantress. The hoary cobweb which from time immemorial has occupied its prescriptive corner or window, has been removed ; the dust of ages has been brushed from the walls ; the virgin loveliness of white is once more seen upon the floors ; yards have been levelled, enclosed, and planted with shrubbery ; window tables and

mantel-pieces are surmounted by pots of flowers; graceful festoons of evergreens, maps, paintings, and drawings adorn the walls; in a word, that perfect cleanliness, order and beauty which at once endear and consecrate the domestic fire-side, have been transferred to the school-room, making it no longer the hated prison house, but the dear, chosen and loved retreat of childhood. Woman, whose unrivalled dominion ever has been, and ever must be in the most tender and holiest affections of humanity, understands full well the art of addressing and winning the juvenile heart, and drawing it out successfully into ardent and constant aspirations towards all that is great and noble and pure in the universe. Well too, has woman by her noble actions, repelled the unnatural and unjust prejudice, once generally, and I fear even now by some entertained, that she is incompetent to preside over and direct intellectual education.

The tutor of Louis Phillippe, the citizen king of the French, who, apart from royalty and all considerations of rank and place, is a man of sound judgment and highly cultivated intellect, was a female; and well did she discharge the duties of her sacred office. In her hands the untaught youth was made to lay aside and forget his royalty. She deprived him of his costly viands, stripped him of his regal vestments, and took away his golden canopies and bed of down; instead of all which she gave him the plain fare, modest apparel, and hard bed of honest labor; in a word, she made him feel and comprehend the great truth, that apart from all the accidents of rank and fortune, every individual is to take and hold his place in the community by the exercise of his own faculties, and by his practice of the private and social virtues. So educated, so taught to know himself and others, it is not at all surprising that when in the terrible experiment of the French Revolution, his rank was abolished, his fortune confiscated, and himself driven into exile, naked and destitute as the veriest beggar-boy of Paris, he still found all the elements for reconstructing his fortune within himself; and now, when raised to a higher position than he ever before occupied, he bears his honors and exercises his powers with moderation; and while he discharges his duties as a monarch, he feels and knows, what few other monarchs can perceive or even imagine, that he is but a man. He owes his unrivalled success to his education; nor is it too much to affirm, that had there been no Madame Genlis, Louis Phillippe had never been citizen-king of the French.

The most grand, daring, and successful genius of his age, a man of giant intellect, a profound statesman, an unrivalled negotiator, and

the greatest military captain of the world, Napoleon, always ascribed the greatness and glory of his unequalled career to the lessons taught him by his mother. So deeply graven on his mind was the truth of woman's pre-eminent influence in the formation of character, that it was one of the standing maxims of his life, "*That there never was an extraordinary man who was the son of an ordinary mother.*"

Many of the master spirits of our own country, whose splendid achievements have enrolled their names high upon the imperishable records of true glory, and whose private and social virtues have enshrined them in the hearts of their fellow-citizens, were trained and fashioned by female intelligence and virtue. Jackson and Calhoun, not to mention others, are noble specimens of what poor, virtuous, widowed mothers can achieve. The brightest and purest name of our history, and of the world's history, which will grow brighter and brighter, and become more and more holy, as it goes sparkling down to posterity, our own beloved, immortal Washington, received the elements of that character of which we are all so justly proud, from the vigilant guardianship, sound judgment, and spotless virtue of his widowed mother. To the male youth of our country, whose generous bosoms glow with ardent aspirations for enduring fame, with all the sincerity and energy that I can command, I would say, make Washington your perpetual model. And to the fairer and lovelier sex, would you reign without rivals in our hearts, would you desire that the great and good of the republic shall raise monuments to your memory and pour the warm tears of a mighty people's gratitude upon your graves, imitate, forever imitate, the virtues of *Mary, the mother of Washington*.

Phrenologists assert that the love of approbation is one of the most active and powerful organs of the human brain; and history assures us that popular applause has been in all ages, one of the most effectual stimulants to great and heroic actions. I have recently witnessed a remarkable proof of the truth of this concurrent testimony of phrenology and history. I have seen the honored representative of one of the most illustrious names of our history,* a man of iron nerve, strong native intellect and most thorough and accomplished education, who has passed twenty years of his life in the highest diplomatic circles of Europe, who has represented his country and asserted and maintained its interests and honor at the courts of many of the most powerful monarchs, and stood unawed and unbowed in the presence of kings; and who has since been raised to the highest honors of his native country; such a man, now upon the verge of fourscore years, with all terrestrial

* Hon. J. Q. Adams.

things rapidly receding forever from his sight, I have seen unnerved; his eyes streaming with tears, his lips quivering, and his voice stifled with emotion by the simple presence of his unsophisticated fellow-countrymen, who gathered around him to testify their respect and admiration of his character, to take him by the hand and to wish him God speed upon his way.

If such a man, under such circumstances, can be so moved, what must be the influence of popular applause upon men in middle life, with fair promise of many years, filled with ardent hopes and high expectations? In this strong, ineradicable and irrepressible feeling of the human soul, Providence has placed in the hands of the people a cheap, simple, yet all-efficient power, by the right use of which they may ultimately raise our country to the highest possible attainments of happiness and glory; or by its misapplication and abuse, rapidly sink it to depths of degradation and misery, from which it can never arise. If popular applause be bestowed only upon the really meritorious, upon talent and intelligence rightly employed, upon unblemished virtue and strict integrity, both in public and in private life, then may we reasonably hope and expect that the noble heritage of free institutions which we have received from the valor, wisdom and patriotism of worthy ancestors, will be cherished, improved and perpetuated to the latest times.

It is unspeakably encouraging to the friends of education, to see an intelligent and virtuous people employing so generally, this great power for the promotion of sound education and for the elevation of the Common Schools. Wherever there is a competent and faithful teacher, a deserving author or compiler, an able and efficient officer, there do the honors and applause of his countrymen meet him to encourage him onward in the path of duty, and to bestow upon him an appropriate reward for his labors. This is the most glorious and encouraging day that the friends of popular education have ever beheld; but cheering as it is, it is only the harbinger to one far more brilliant and glorious, if teachers, authors and officers shall continue active and persevering in the discharge of all their duties.

Lastly, religion itself, whose principle, deeper and firmer than all other things, is rooted and riveted in the inmost recesses of the human soul, imperatively demands the right instruction and thorough education of every human being. It is true that a law-established Church, filled with a self-seeking spirit, has too often shown itself an oppressor and scourge; but it is equally true that an enlightened Christian

ministry, imbued with the spirit of the Gospel, has ever been the advocate of equality, liberty, justice, and truth, and in all its acts given full and lucid proof that it has been sent by Heaven on errands of mercy to mankind, and that the design and object of its office are to enlighten, to purify and to save. Such a ministry has always taught and always will teach, that the "Christian worships a God of intelligence as well as of love, and that exalted piety requires no less the cultivation of the intellect than the purity and warmth of the affections." It recognises the works and the commands of the Creator in the world around us, as well as in the written Word; and it has long since proclaimed, that in the process of converting the world, the development of intellect must ever precede or accompany the truths of the Gospel. This is only a single mode of announcing the grand fundamental truth which is expressly declared on some of the pages of the inspired Volume, and may be clearly traced upon many others, that all material forms of the outer world are but symbols of the deeper spiritual truths of the universe.

The godlike plan of thoroughly educating the entire mass of people, is one of the most astonishing achievements of modern times; nay, there is nothing in human history, if you contemplate the intrinsic value of the thing, the profundity of its conception, and the magnificent results produced, that can surpass it. Compared with this, all our wonderful victories over physical nature, as exhibited in our unrivalled canals and railroads, dwindle into utter insignificance. The Common School system surpasses in value and importance the system of internal improvements in the same proportion that mind and morals surpass in excellence inanimate matter. The Croton Aqueduct, by which a whole river is raised from its bed, borne over hill, valley and stream for the distance of forty miles, and poured in copious effusion over the whole area of the largest city of the western hemisphere, supplying in unmeasured abundance a population of more than three hundred thousand souls, with one of the chief elements of physical cleanliness and health, is one of the most stupendous achievements of science and labor, and will be a land-mark of our times in the eye of posterity. But how rapidly the grandeur of the Croton Aqueduct fades from our view before the matchless glory of the Common School Aqueduct, which lifts up from their lowest deeps, and draws down from the highest heavens, the elements of knowledge, and pours them with boundless profusion, not over the meager area of one solitary city only, but throughout the entire domain of the Empire State, filling as freely and impartially as the light of heaven, the merchant palace of the city,

and the log-built hut of the forest, with the elements of mental and moral life.

It is but little more than a quarter of a century that the Common School system has had a legal existence in New-York; yet, such have been the wisdom and efficiency of our legislation upon this subject, that we have now by far the most perfect educational organization in the Union. I hope this fact, however, creditable as it is, and grateful as it must be to a patriotic people, will not cause us to relax our exertions, or in any way to retard our progress in the noble career upon which we have so auspiciously entered. Upon this subject, above all others, may we ever be mindful of the duty enjoined upon us by the glorious motto of our State, *EXCELSIOR*.

Whatever may be the action of others, I have the strongest assurance that the people of Otsego will ever sustain the enviable relation which they now bear to this great mission of philanthropy and patriotism. History accords to a citizen of your county, Jedediah Peck, a distinguished rank among the early fathers of the Common School system of New-York; and to another citizen of your county, Hon. Jabez D. Hammond, history will hereafter accord the high honor of a leading and commanding position among those virtuous and enlightened men who have cherished, defended, protected and made popular the system which Judge Peck and his noble compeers called into being.

In conclusion, I cannot better place before you the great duty which is incumbent upon us all in relation to this subject, and the fearful and appalling consequences of its non-performance, than by adopting the language of one of the most accomplished, able and eloquent advocates of the Common Schools. *

"Remember the child whose voice first lisps to-day, before that voice shall whisper sedition in secret, or thunder treason at the head of an armed band. Remember the child whose hand to-day first lifts its tiny bawble, before that hand shall scatter firebrands, arrows and death. Remember those sportive groups of youth, in whose halcyon bosoms there sleeps an ocean as yet scarcely ruffled by the passions which soon shall heave it as with the tempest's strength. Remember that whatever station in life you may fill, these mortals—these immortals, are your care. Devote, expend, consecrate yourselves to the holy work of their improvement. Pour out light and truth as God pours out sunshine and rain. No longer seek knowledge as the luxury of a few, but dispense it among all as the bread of life. Learn only how the ignorant may learn; how the innocent may be preserved, the vicious

* HON. HORACE MANN.

reclaimed. Call down the astronomer from the skies: call up the geologist from his subterranean explorations; summon, if need be, the mightiest intellects from the Council Chamber of the Nation; enter cloistered halls, where the scholiast muses over superfluous annotations; dissolve conclave and synod, where subtle polemics are discussing their barren dogmas; collect whatever of talent, or erudition, or eloquence, or authority the broad land can supply, *and go forth, AND TEACH THIS PEOPLE.* For in the name of the living God, it must be proclaimed that licentiousness shall be the liberty, violence and chicanery shall be the law, and superstition and craft shall be the religion; and the self-destructive indulgence of all sensual and unhallowed passions, shall be the only happiness of that people who neglect the education of their children."

APPENDIX.

A.

Extract from the Report of the HON. SAMUEL YOUNG, Superintendent of Common Schools, January 12, 1843.

When the law, creating the office of deputy superintendent of common schools in the several counties was first promulgated, having been passed in a period of the most profligate and reckless legislative expenditure, it was, in the minds of many, associated with the broad and impudent system of felonious enactment, "eating out the substance of the people," and stealing the bread, and plundering the means of education from myriads of unborn children, which has brought upon this State the terrific desolation of a debt of twenty-seven millions of dollars. He who now occupies the station of State Superintendent, derived his first impressions of this law from such an association of ideas; and on entering upon the duties of the office, felt a decided predisposition to exercise whatever influence he might possess, to save the expense by an abolition of the system. But to have passed an irrevocable sentence of condemnation upon it, without first subjecting it to the test of a rigid scrutiny, would have been manifestly unjust. A meeting of the deputy superintendents of the several counties was advertised to be held in the city of Utica, in May last; and one of the prominent objects of the Superintendent in being present at that convention, was to obtain, if possible, an accurate knowledge and to form a satisfactory opinion of the intelligence, zeal and capacity for usefulness of its members. The proceedings of that convention have been widely circulated and extensively read; and it is no unmeaning compliment to allege, that for the purpose of illustrating and improving the important principles of elementary instruction, no body of men of equal information and devotedness, has ever before assembled in this State. But the practical utility of the system, its adaptation to supply the deficiencies of supervision, to point out the extent of existing evils, and to suggest the most feasible remedies, to allay the bitter feuds and animosities which often mar the peace and retard the prosperity of school districts, and to rouse and inspire parental indifference with a love for the advancement and happiness of children, by the acquisition of useful knowledge in well regulated schools, were yet to be tested. How far these important objects have been effected, will, to a considerable extent, be seen and appreciated by the Legislature, on reading the able reports of the deputy superintendents herewith transmitted.

In every county in the State, where the deputy superintendent has assiduously fulfilled his mission, an improvement in the condition of the schools is manifest. The frequent lectures and expostulations of these officers, at meetings of the inhabitants of districts convened by them, have done much good, by arousing the thoughtless, confirming the wavering, and exciting to more vigorous exertions all the friends of education. Many compromises of obstinate district quarrels have been effected by the friendly interference, and pacific counsels of these officers. In several of those frequent contests brought up by appeal, respecting sites of school houses and divisions, and lines of districts, involving questions respecting distances and convenience of travel, the statements of which, by the conflicting parties are often utterly irreconcilable, the county superintendent, on a requisition from this Department, has repaired to the spot, and carefully collected and transmitted the naked facts, upon which a satisfactory decision might be based. The number of appeals is increasing with the multiplication of districts, and now averages nearly one for every two days in the year, requiring the examination of exceedingly voluminous, complicated, and often contradictory documents, and the adjustment of a great variety of legal principles and individual interests. The amount annually paid from the State treasury for postage on these documents, constitutes a serious item in the aggregate expense of the department. In addition to these appeals, the daily correspondence of the Department, with the inhabitants and officers of districts requiring information and advice for their guidance, occupies a very large proportion of its time, and is constantly increasing. It has occurred to the Superintendent that a great saving might be effected in time and money, as well as a greater degree of practical efficiency given to the system, by the reference of all appeals to the deputy superintendent, in the first instance for his decision; with the right to any party aggrieved thereby to bring such decision up for review by this Department. A large proportion also of the ordinary correspondence of the Department might advantageously take this direction; suitable provisions being made to defray the charge of necessary postage. The blundering, inartificial and contradictory statements of litigants might then be elucidated and rectified by an officer, who, if necessary, could go to the district and ascertain the real merits of each case; and the painful necessity often cast upon this Department, of deciding doubtful questions on crude and conflicting testimony would be obviated, while at the same time a great economy of expense would be secured.

Deputy superintendents properly qualified for the discharge of their functions, possessing a competent knowledge of the moral, intellectual and physical sciences, familiar with all the modern improvements in elementary instruction, and earnestly intent on elevating the condition of our common schools, can do much more to accomplish this desirable result, than all the other officers connected with the system. Acting on a broader theatre, they can perform more efficiently all that supervision which has heretofore been so deplorably neglected, or badly

executed. The system of deputy superintendents is capable of securing, and can be made to secure, the following objects:

It can produce a complete and efficient supervision of all the schools of the State, in reference as well to their internal management, as to their external details:

It can be made to unite all the schools of the State into one great system; making the advancement of each the ambition of all; furnishing each with the means of attaining the highest standard of practical excellence, by communicating to it every improvement discovered or suggested in every or any of the others:

It can do much towards dissipating the stolid indifference which paralyzes many portions of the community, and towards arousing, enlightening and enlisting public sentiment in the great work of elementary instruction, by systematic and periodical appeals to the inhabitants of each school district, in the form of lectures, addresses, &c.

It can be made to dismiss from our schools all immoral and incompetent teachers, and to secure the services of such only as are qualified and efficient, thereby elevating the grade of the school master, and infusing new vitality in the school.

An attentive examination of the interesting reports of the deputy superintendents will clearly show that the accomplishment of several of the most important of these objects is already in a state of encouraging progression.

Extract from Mr. Hulburt's Report on the Petitions for abolishing the office of County Superintendent of Common Schools, and on Remonstrances against the same.

The system of county superintendents was established to correct these and other kindred evils; to make reports on the conditions of the schools, school houses, the best method of imparting instruction, bringing before one district the successful experiments of other districts, exposing the defects and evils that existed, awakening the dormant interests of parents, in short, diffusing generally the better means of education now enjoyed in the more advanced sections of the State. The principal provisions of the system were many years ago recommended in the counties of Herkimer and Otsego; its value has been tested for more than a quarter of a century in Holland, and with equal success it has been introduced into every State of Europe, in which schools have received the permanent attention of government.

It has been recommended in New-Jersey, Ohio and Kentucky. When in 1839, Connecticut awoke from her long apathy on the subject of schools, she passed an act enlarging the powers and stimulating the efficiency of her common school visitors, a class of officers which answer to our deputy superintendents. In 1842, when this renovated system had been little over two years in operation, the able Secretary of the Board of Commissioners of Common Schools, in his report

says, "no adequate substitute can be provided for frequent, faithful, and intelligent visitation of schools, carrying along with it wise counsel for the future to teachers and pupils, encouragement for past success, and rebuke for neglect, defective discipline and methods of instruction. The mode of visiting should be such as to make known to all the schools the superior methods of any one, and awaken a generous rivalry between the teachers and scholars of the several schools."

The committee can but think those who are petitioning that the office of the county deputies may be abolished, on the ground that it is a useless expense, are looking too soon for results. These officers have but entered upon the discharge of duties, when, in this State, they had no light of past experience to guide them; the territory was new and unexplored; they have hardly been able to survey the extent, and much less to examine the nature of it. If here and there they have found a kindly soil, capable of receiving at once and producing, the greater portion must be regarded "as fallow ground," to be broken up and cultivated, ere the expected fruit matures. It would not be surprising if all the deputies had not come up to the expectation formed; that when all the duties were new, some should have erred, should have been indiscreet, inefficient, incapable; but these are evils and defects which every succeeding year will diminish.

It is not expected that the appointment of deputies will at once create qualified teachers, build suitable school houses, infuse into parents an interest in their district schools; but who that reads their reports can doubt but that they have already done something, and are capable of doing much more in renovating our school system? If there is a probability that their efforts will greatly abate, if not eradicate the most prominent evils and abuses existing, can we hesitate as to our duty? Were our School Fund sunk like a rain drop in the ocean, then might we safely dispense with our deputy system, for then might we hope to see parents once more the faithful inspectors and supervisors of their children's schools. But if with no equivalent substitute, we abandon the present and relapse back into the past, shall we not be faithless to our trust, false to the true interests of the State, false to the sacred cause of popular education in all time to come?

Your committee after a full and deliberate investigation, have unanimously concurred in recommending the preservation of the deputy system; believing it to be, with the additional power now conferred, not only the most economical and efficient, but the most important provision in our complex and extensive organization of public instruction, and anticipating from its continuance the rapid and thorough reformation of schools. Some may deem these expectations visionary, but the results of one year, and that the first, lead us confidently to look forward, in the more perfect working of the system, for greater and more widely diffused, physical, moral and intellectual good, than from any of the numerous measures of social amelioration that claim the thoughts and the aid of the statesman or the philanthropist.

B.

The Voice of De Witt Clinton.

"The first duty of government, and the surest evidence of good government, is the encouragement of education. A general diffusion of knowledge is the precursor and protector of republican institutions, and in it we must confide as the conservative power that will watch over our liberties and guard them against fraud, intrigue, corruption and violence. Our system of instruction, with all its numerous benefits, is still, however, susceptible of great improvements. In two years the elements of instruction may be acquired, and the remaining years must either be spent in repetition or idleness, unless the teachers of common schools are competent to instruct in the higher branches of knowledge. The outlines of Geography, Algebra, Mineralogy, Agricultural Chemistry, Mechanical Philosophy, Surveying, Geometry, Astronomy, Political Economy, and Ethics, might be communicated in that period of time by able preceptors, without essential interference with the calls of domestic industry. *The vocation of a teacher, in its influence on the character and destinies of the rising, and all future generations, has either not been fully understood, or duly estimated.* IT IS, OR OUGHT TO BE, RANKED AMONG THE LEARNED PROFESSIONS. I consider the system of our Common Schools as the palladium of our freedom, for no reasonable apprehension can be entertained of its subversion, as long as the great body of the people are enlightened by education. To increase the funds, to extend the benefits, and to remedy the defects of this excellent system, is worthy of your most deliberate attention. I cannot recommend, in terms too strong and impressive, as munificent appropriations as the facilities of this State will authorize, for all establishments connected with the interests of education, the exaltation of literature and science, and the improvement of the human mind.

"The great bulwark of a republican government, is the cultivation of education; for the right of suffrage cannot be exercised in a salutary manner without intelligence. Ten years of a child's life, from five to fifteen, may be spent in a Common School, and ought this immense portion of time to be absorbed in learning what can be acquired in a short period? Perhaps one-fourth of our population is annually instructed in our Common Schools, and ought the minds and the morals of the future generations to be intrusted to the guardianship of incompetence? The scale of instruction must be elevated; the standard of education ought to be raised.

Small and suitable collections of books and maps attached to our Common Schools, and periodical examinations to test the proficiency of the scholars, and the merits of the teachers, are worthy of attention. When it is understood that objects of this description enter into the very formation of our characters, control our destinies through life, protect the freedom and advance the glory of our country; and that this is the appropriate soil of liberty and education, let it be our pride, as it is

our duty, to spare no exertions, and to shrink from no expense in the promotion of a cause consecrated by religion; and enjoined by patriotism."

DE WITT CLINTON.

Extract from Gov. Hubbard's Address to the Legislature of New Hampshire, June, 1843.

"Our primary schools richly deserve at all times the patronage and encouragement of the legislature. Our government is based upon the virtue of the people: that virtue is best preserved as knowledge shall be most diffused. As the means of education, the nurseries of pure morals, and the sources of undefiled religion, these primary institutions of our country have within the last twelve months excited much of the public attention. A new impulse has been awakened to the importance of our Common Schools for the spread of morality and religion, for the diffusion of intelligence among the people, and for the preservation of our republican institutions.

"Those patriots who framed the constitution of our State, incorporated into that instrument a sentiment worthy of themselves, "That knowledge and learning generally diffused through a community were essential to the preservation of a free government, and that it was the bounden duty of legislators and magistrates to cherish the interests of all seminaries and public schools." This injunction of our political fathers should never be forgotten or disregarded by the friends of popular liberty. In my first address to the legislature, I alluded to the republican character of our free school system. I then remarked that in these institutions are imparted to the youth of our State, that love of civil and religious liberty, that high devotion to the cause of human rights, which lead to the unfailing exertion of their energies, and of their efforts for the security of individual and public freedom. The constitution of our primary schools points them out as especially meriting public confidence and public support. The scholars in those seminaries must be on terms of strict equality, and mingle together exclusively for instruction. The children of the poor as well as the rich—those emanating from the laboring classes, as well as those from the independent portions of our community—enjoy the same rights and the same privileges—they commence their course of study, enter upon the acquisition of knowledge under like influences and with like hopes. Our primary schools may well be denominated public institutions: they are sustained at the public charge, are dedicated to the use of all the youth of certain ages within the limits of our State; and a direct benefit is periodically realized by the education of the sons and daughters of our republic. Our free school system may well be considered as the heart of the body politic, and the streams which are continually flowing from it, give health, vigor and strength to the members of our community.

"It has been matter of complaint, that our primary schools were not receiving that encouragement from the hands of the legislature which they ought to receive. Academies and High Schools, it is said, have been multiplied in our land to the neglect of those primary institutions which should be our pride and boast, and which should receive, as they merit, our constant care and support.

"Far be it from me to say any thing which might tend to discourage that public and benevolent spirit manifested in providing for the thorough education of any portion of our community. If the effect of multiplying other literary and scientific institutions be to break down our Common Schools, to change their character and impair their usefulness, all the true friends of a general diffusion of knowledge and learning would regret the tendency of any causes to produce any such effect. There is, however, within the power of the legislature at any time, a perfect remedy for any such evil. Elevate the character of our primary schools. Place within the reach of the most depressed son of poverty within our State, the means of obtaining a thorough English education through the influence of these free seminaries of learning. Let there be such a division (wherever practicable) of the youth, that the younger scholars may constitute an exclusive class to receive such instruction as they would require; and let the scholars more advanced in attainments, be placed under the exclusive guidance and instruction of those well qualified to teach the higher branches of an English education.

"It is a reproach to our free school system, that the higher branches of Mathematics, Philosophy and Political Economy can only be acquired at our Academies and High Schools. This should not be so. An invidious feeling is thereby engendered among the youth of our State, and one of the great objects of our free primary schools is thereby defeated, and that is, the opportunity of giving to the poorer classes of our community as thorough an English education as can be attained elsewhere; and thus fitting them to perform the duties which may devolve upon them as citizens of the republic."

C 1.

Constitution of a Town Association.

We, the undersigned, Teachers of Common Schools and friends of popular education, in the town of _____ and in the county of _____ for the purpose of promoting our mutual advancement in knowledge, and for the better discharge of our duties as teachers, parents, and guardians of children and youth, do hereby form ourselves into an Association, and agree to be regulated and governed by the Constitution below written:

Article 1.—This Association shall be styled the Common School Teachers' Association of _____

Article 2.—The Officers of this Association shall be a President, Vice-President, a Recording and Corresponding Secretary, who shall be chosen by ballot by the members of this Association, and who shall hold their offices for one month, and until others are chosen.

Article 3.—This Association shall meet at o'clock on Saturday afternoon, once in two weeks, at such place as shall be agreed upon at the meeting next preceding, and the first meeting shall be held at the School House in District No.

Article 4.—The President shall preside at all meetings, and in his absence the Vice-President, and in the absence of both, the Association shall choose by open nomination and hand vote, a president *pro tempore*.

Article 5.—The Recording Secretary shall keep a book of minutes of the proceedings of the Association, in which all matters discussed, votes taken, and officers elected, shall be recorded in a regular manner, and the minutes of the meeting next preceding shall be read at the meeting ensuing, corrected and adopted.

Article 6.—At every meeting of the Association, an essay shall be read upon the subject of teaching and the management of Schools, by some member who shall have been appointed for that purpose by the President, at a regular meeting two weeks previous.

Article 7.—All matters discussed before this Association shall have reference to teaching and the management of schools, and shall be proposed in writing two weeks previous to their discussion.

Article 8.—The meetings of this Association shall be private, unless otherwise directed by a vote of its members.

Article 9.—It shall be the duty of the members of this Association, by and with the consent and aid of the inhabitants of the districts in which they are respectively employed, once in each year, to prepare themselves, and as many of their pupils as may be practicable, for a public examination; at which all the Common Schools in the town shall be invited to attend and to take part in its exercises.

Article 10.—At the public examination, each teacher shall examine his own pupils for such time as shall have been previously agreed upon in relation to the different studies they shall have pursued.

Article 11.—Any person of good moral character may become a member of this Association by subscribing its constitution and paying to the President, who is hereby made Treasurer, the sum of twenty-five cents annually.

Article 12.—The New-York District School Journal shall be the organ of this Association; in it shall be published such proceedings as the Association may direct, and each member shall use his influence to extend its circulation.

Article 13.—This Constitution may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of its members, provided notice in writing of the proposed amendment shall have been given four weeks previous to the meeting at which the said amendment is to be acted upon.

Constitution of a County Association.

We, the undersigned, regarding thorough and universal education as the first duty of a free State, and the greatest blessing to individuals, for the purpose of elevating the character, increasing the efficiency of our Common Schools, and securing more generally to children and youth the advantages of right instruction, do hereby form ourselves into a County Association, and do agree to be regulated and governed by the Constitution below written :

Article 1.—This Association shall be styled the County Common School Association.

Article 2.—Any person of good moral character may become a member of this Association by subscribing this Constitution and paying annually to the Treasurer the sum of

Article 3.—The Officers of this Association shall be a President, two Vice-Presidents, a Corresponding and a Recording Secretary, who shall hold their offices for one year and until others are chosen.

Article 4.—There shall be an Executive Board, consisting of the officers of this Association, the county and town Superintendents of Common Schools, and such other members as the Association may appoint at the annual meeting, who shall have charge of the general business of the Association, and shall also from time to time perform such special duties as may be required. This Board shall appoint from its members a committee, a majority of whom shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Article 5.—The President shall preside at all meetings of the Association and Executive Board, and in his absence, one of the Vice-Presidents, and in the absence of both President and Vice-Presidents, the Association or Board shall choose, by open nomination, a president *pro tempore*.

Article 6.—The Recording Secretary shall keep full minutes of all the proceedings of the Association and Executive Board. The minutes of each meeting of the Association and Executive Board shall be read at its close, and when corrected and approved, shall be recorded in a fair hand and preserved.

Article 7.—The Corresponding Secretary shall communicate with kindred Associations, and with individuals who are engaged in promoting and advancing the cause of education, and to procure by all means in his power, such facts and information as will be serviceable to this Association in attaining the objects for which it is formed.

Article 8.—The annual meeting of this Association shall be held at the village of on the Wednesday following the second Monday in September. There shall also be special meetings of the Association at such times and places as the Executive Board may appoint.

Article 9.—An address to the Association shall be made by some

competent person at each annual meeting, who with an alternate, shall be selected by the Association at the annual meeting next preceding that at which his address is to be made.

Article 10.—The Executive Board shall at the time of each annual meeting thoroughly and impartially examine such persons as may offer themselves as candidates for State Licenses to teach Common Schools, and shall recommend such as they may deem qualified for that high honor.

Article 11.—The Executive Board shall thoroughly and impartially examine all Text-books which are proposed to be used in the Common Schools of the county, and it is earnestly and respectfully recommended to parents and teachers to abstain from introducing new books into the Common Schools, until the approbation of the Executive Board shall have been expressed.

Article 12.—The President shall appoint such a number of members of this Association as he may deem proper to prepare from time to time, and submit essays upon such interesting topics connected with education as he may designate, or the member appointed may elect, which essays shall be read before the Association.

Article 13.—It shall be the duty of this Association to encourage such persons as it may consider well adapted to become useful teachers of Common Schools, in all practicable cases, *to enter the Teachers' Department and Class in all Academies*, where such a department or class has been instituted, or to unite and form a temporary Normal School, so that thorough preparation may in all cases be made for the prompt and efficient discharge of the duty of teachers.

Article 14.—This Association shall recommend and encourage the formation of Town Associations for the advancement of the cause of education, and for the improvement of the Common Schools.

Article 15.—The New-York District School Journal shall be the organ of this Association; in it shall be published such proceedings as the Executive Board may direct, and its circulation shall be encouraged and promoted by this Association.

Article 16.—This Constitution may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at any regular meeting.

APPENDIX D.

Extract from the Speech of the Hon. R. D. Davis, delivered before the Literary Societies of Geneva College, on the 1st of August, 1843:

“When society permits men to provide for themselves and to accumulate such property as they can lawfully acquire, that very permission creates a duty and binds each to work out his own subsistence without any infringement of the same privilege in others. Men are made equal in this chance of accumulation, and it is against all the

principles of equal rights, for any one man to take from another what belongs to him; and they who live on others, whether by force or fraud, by the pretence of business and position, or any other cheating, violate the fast foundations of all society, and ought not to be accounted reputable within it. Educated and professional men are apt to fancy that they must support a certain style in life whatever may be their income, and it is but too common to see them reckless and indifferent to every thing like probity and independence in their pecuniary affairs. I advise you to take the opposite course; to make it your first object to live within your means, and your next to amass some property. No matter if your income be small, still live within it, and lay up something. A man who cannot save something out of a small income, never will do it out of a large one. It is of no moment that you can save only a trifle, for it is not the amount that you begin with or can then save, that is any thing, but the art, the secret, the ability to do it, and the habit of doing it; this is the important matter, the thing that will be of value to you and facilitate and insure your future success, when you can save that which will be worth possessing. I do not care to have you grow into great wealth, for that is neither a benefit nor a blessing to any man; but I am anxious to impress you with the importance of securing a competence, a reasonable independence, for without it the temptations, trials and exigencies of life may impair your integrity, usefulness and honor. If he be dishonest who does wrong to supply his wants, he must be twice a knave who will do it to add to his abundance.

"Indebtedness is bondage, and the man who allows himself to incur obligations that he cannot pay, to live on at the expense and loss of others, or to risk what he cannot lose, must be so dormant in his moral sense that he is dangerous to himself and others. The course that I have recommended to you to pursue, will do more than to benefit yourselves, for it will lead you into those habits, manners and principles, which lie at the foundation of all private and public welfare; it will make you patterns and examples of probity, prudence and propriety in your respective communities; and it will conciliate and reconcile and attach those who cannot have the advantages which you have possessed to that cause of education which shall through you requite to the mass of men a benignant and beneficial return for their allowance, encouragement and sanction; and it will show to the world that education is not and need not be hostile, but may be and through you is of service to the whole, and not to you only, but to others and to all. Rely upon it, that the plain and every day virtues and excellencies of life make up all that is most valuable in the world. Talent, education, manners, fashion, elegance, magnificence, may and do adorn and grace these homely traits, but without the sterling and standard attributes of character, they are a nuisance and a curse. You, as educated and elevated men, must cast your influence where it can do the most good, and thus repay to the world an adequate and an honest recompense for the bles-

sings and benefits, the privileges and advantages which Providence and society have bestowed upon you."

The following extract from a speech of HENRY BARNARD, Esq., State Superintendent of Common Schools of Rhode Island, delivered at the State Convention at Syracuse, 1845, shows in what light he regards the offices of State and County Superintendents of Common Schools, as they now exist by statute in this State. Mr. Barnard is a gentleman of extensive scientific and literary attainments, and has for years devoted all his powers to the investigation and defence of Popular Education. He has travelled extensively in the United States and in Europe, and his opinions are the result of long and attentive observation.

"The most admirable feature in your school system is the provision for County Superintendents—the enlisting the services of fifty or sixty intelligent men, acting under the specific requirements of the school law, and the general directions of the head of the school department, directly upon every school, and every teacher, and every district and town school officer, and very widely upon the parents of children, as well as the children themselves, within their corporate limits. There is nothing to be compared with this in the school system of any other State. Under the continued operation of this plan of supervision the spirit of improvement must be aroused, and must pervade every town and every district in the State. Defects in school houses, in methods of government, and instruction, in the classification of schools, in the arrangement of studies, in the character, attainments, and views of teachers, and in school books, must be discovered, discussed, and the appropriate remedies pointed out. Local and individual improvements must be made known, and become the property of the whole county, and through the District School Journal, and the annual reports of the Superintendents, become the common property of the whole State. That there should be some friction in the working of this new wheel in your system, that there should be some unwise things said or done, or some wise things unsaid or undone somewhere, over so great a field of operation, is not to be wondered at—and that there should be complaints of various kinds, fostered it is to be feared in some cases by demagogues, and in most cases growing out of ignorance and interested motives, is very natural. But these things will disappear under the faithful, intelligent, and continued action of these officers, whose reports and whose attendance year after year, in such Conventions as these, is the best evidence of their usefulness and of their fitness for the office which they fill. I should look upon it as a calamity to the cause of school improvement in other States, should this experiment of County Supervision be arrested or defeated at this time. There is nothing in all the wise legislation of your State in regard to public instruction, unless it be in the liberal appropriation for district libraries, which the friends of public education elsewhere are so anxious to see adopted into the school systems of their respective States. Its abolition would everywhere be regarded as a long stride backward. It would be better to curtail the amount distributed to the schools for other purposes, than to save in the compensation for this class of officers, whose labors at least double the value of all your school expenditures, by awakening and diffusing public and parental interest, and giving life, intelligence, and progress, to teachers and local school officers."

Extract from MR. HENRY'S Address to the Board of Supervisors of the county of Herkimer, at their meeting in Nov. 1845 :—

The imperative duty of educating, or forming aright the character of the young, is solemnly enjoined upon us in every page of our country's history.—The unanimous voice of the Sages, Patriots and Heroes, whose united action gave us the glorious heritage of free institutions, bids us ever preserve a watchful care over the formation of youthful character, assuring us that public liberty cannot, for one moment, exist after intelligence and virtue have ceased to be diffused among the masses of the People. This is the grand moral of American History—the cardinal maxim of American Politics.

The late distinguished Superintendent of Common Schools, the Hon. SAMUEL YOUNG—whose efficient and judicious action, as a School officer, is cordially and unanimously approved by the wise and patriotic of every sect and party—has recently and publicly declared, that the subject of popular education is second in importance to no other claiming the attention of a free People. In the justness of this sentiment, I cannot for a single moment doubt that every gentleman of this Board unreservedly concurs ; and I am confident that each is unalterably resolved that this great and vital interest shall never suffer by carelessness in the performance of any act in relation to it, with which he is charged.

The duty of appointing County Superintendents is by law assigned to the Boards of Supervisors ; and safer and more discreet depositories of this delicate and responsible power do not exist. The selections which have been made for four years past, almost uniformly attest, that sound judgment and discretion, competent literary and scientific attainments, unblemished moral character, and ardent and untiring devotion to the great cause of popular instruction, have been the only effectual recommendations which have led to these appointments ; and while selections for this office shall be influenced only by such considerations, there can be no doubt that the action of these officers will be highly conducive to the prosperity and salutary influence of the Common Schools.

It has been objected by some that the system of supervising the schools through the agency of County and Town Superintendents, is complicated and expensive. To this objection it may be truly answered, that while this system is far more efficient and salutary, its expense is at least one-third less than that of any system which has preceded it. The true standard by which to determine the value of our Common School System is the influence it exerts upon the character of its pupils and of the public at large.

To all objections that may be urged against our Common School System on account of its expense, it may be properly answered, that it will always be safer and better economy to appropriate hundreds for education, than hundreds of thousands for the suppression of insurrection and rebellion.

The common school system of New York, comprising its eleven thousand school districts, with its free library in each of them; its state, county, and town superintendents; its Normal school, and Teachers' Institutes; its District School Journal, and Teachers' Advocate; its State, County, and Town Associations of Teachers; its six or seven hundred thousand of pupils; its intelligent, harmonious, and efficient action, has excited the wonder and admiration of every state in our Union—many of which have already paid us the high compliment of essentially adopting it by legislative enactments. The record of this glorious system will hereafter glow upon the impartial page of history as the proudest monument of our legislation. Indeed, it has been already pronounced by the Hon. Horace Mann, and a more competent judge does not exist, the best common school system in the world. The following is the description of our system as given by that accomplished, able, and indefatigable champion of popular education in the Massachusetts Common School Journal, of July 15, 1845 :

"New York has the best common school system in the world. The state has a magnificent fund. There is a library in every school district. Provisions are made for introducing apparatus into all the schools. It has a Normal school for the preparation of teachers; and it has devised the plan of Teachers' Institutes, which are *short* Normal schools. An educational paper is also sent, at the expense of the state, to every school district in it. The school system of New York is not only superior in its structure and organization, but it is worked with more efficiency than any other. Indeed, the working may be said to result from the structure. It goes easily, powerfully, and with as little friction as such a vast piece of machinery could be expected to do."

The history of the reform which has been achieved in our common school system, has already become a subject of deep interest; and those who originated its plan, or afterwards aided in its progress, are now very generally receiving credit for good services performed for their country.

Perhaps it may not be inappropriate to the present occasion, briefly to review the proceedings of the people of this county for several years past in relation to this interesting topic. In the fall of 1836, a convention of the friends of popular education and common school reform, was called to meet in January next ensuing.

In pursuance of this call, a convention assembled at the courthouse, on the third day of January, 1837. Of this convention, Hon. N. S. Benton was chosen president, Henry Ellison, and Ephraim Tisdale, Esqrs., vice presidents, and E. A. Munson, Esq., secretary.

From the series of resolutions, reported by Lauren Ford, Esq., and adopted by the convention, the following is an extract :

"*Resolved*, That this convention do respectfully suggest to the legislature of this state, the propriety of providing by law for the appointment and payment of a general instructor of common schools for each county, or given number of school districts, whose time shall be exclusively devoted to the personal inspection and superintendence of all the schools in his district or county, with such powers, and subject to such regulations, as may be adopted by a general superintendent for the state, or by a board of county inspectors, as the legislature may provide."

From the address to the people, reported by J. Henry, jun., and adopted by that convention, the following is an extract :

"It is believed that a more thorough supervision of our schools is necessary to their success. The superintendence of the education of half a million children and youth, is a task equal to the undivided energies of the most competent individual, even when aided by a board of education and all necessary sub-agents. This duty, in our state, has hitherto been incidentally performed by the Secretary of State, and has been as efficient and salutary as could be expected under the circumstances of the case; but we believe the able officer now filling that station (Gen. Dix) would unreservedly concur with us in our views upon this subject. We hope soon to number a minister of public instruction among our state officers, and to see that minister advised and aided by a state board of education, and also by active county inspectors of common schools."

Such were the recommendations of the people of this county more than four years before the passage of our present school act; nor does their action here terminate. The bill, as originally reported, gave the appointment of county superintendents to the secretary of state. On the suggestion of the Hon. A. Loomis, then member of the assembly from this county, it was so amended as to give the appointment of these officers to the board of supervisors; and when so amended, it was supported by the votes of both Messrs. Loomis and Hoffman. This amendment was a most important one; for such is the jealousy of central power, that without it, the act, in all human probability, would have been long since repealed.

Lastly, a citizen of this county, one who has been most active and prominent in recommending the reforms which, in practice, have proved so beneficial—the Hon. N. S. Benton—has been recently called to the superintendency of our unrivalled common school system. At the late Syracuse Convention of County Superintendents, he publicly declared that his original views had been confirmed rather than changed by his observation of the practical effects of our present common school organization, and that it was his fixed resolution to devote his best powers to make it as efficient and salutary in action as it is judicious and comprehensive in principle. In the fulfilment of this resolution, he will be aided and sustained by the cordial co-operation of the people of New York; but in no part of the state, judging from their past history, will his efforts be more cheerfully, perseveringly, and effectually supported than in the county of Herkimer.

One of the most striking and valuable characteristics of our common school system is its entire destitution of sectarian or party prejudice. It is reared in that liberal, though catholic spirit, which so generally pervades the constitution of the Union; establishing a perfect equality of rights, and diffusing its benefits, like the dews of heaven, alike on the rich and poor. We trace such a spirit in the conduct of those distinguished citizens who have, from time to time, been charged with the administration of the system. Hence we see a Young publicly and magnanimously surrendering his preconceived opinions, perfecting the details, and with all the indomitable energies of his soul, entering into and carrying out in practice the admirable arrangements of the sagacious and accomplished SPENCER. On such conduct, indicating the purest and loftiest virtue, the patriot and philanthropist will always dwell with ever-increasing delight. When we contemplate this magnificent system of popular instruction, reared by the united intelligence and wisdom of our whole people; when we think of the hundreds of thousands of human beings whose minds are to be enlightened, whose souls are to be purified by the precious influences which it is constantly sending forth, is it too much to hope and believe, that in reference to this great cause, "we shall all of us grow candid, and bury in silence the odious epithets of party distinction?"

It is now ten years since I became a resident in this county ; and during that whole period, the improvement of our common schools has been one of the chief objects of my pursuit. For four years past, I have been exclusively employed in investigating the great principles upon which useful and practical education is based, and in the performance of my official duties. In view of this long period of service, I trust that I may now respectfully announce that I am no longer a candidate for the office of county superintendent.

Be pleased, gentlemen, to accept my cordial thanks for the confidence which you and your predecessors have reposed in me. The relations which have existed between me and the several boards of supervisors, during both my official terms, will ever be a subject of grateful remembrance. Permit me, through you, to make public acknowledgment of the many tributes of regard bestowed upon me by the good citizens of Herkimer county—to return them my sincere thanks, for the generous hospitality with which they have ever welcomed me to their well-furnished and happy homes. Never will the recollection of their generosity be effaced from my memory. More true and constant friends I have never known ; and to the last day of my life, my ardent prayers shall be offered for their happiness and prosperity.

On the conclusion of Mr. Henry's remarks, GEORGE AVERY, Esq., Supervisor of Salisbury, offered the following resolution, which was adopted unanimously :—

Resolved, That the thanks of this Board be tendered to JAMES HENRY, Jr., Esq., late County Superintendent of Common Schools, for the ability and fidelity with which he has discharged the duties of that office ; and that in the opinion of this Board, his retirement is a severe loss to the cause of education in this county and State.

The following remarks upon text books are for the most part extracted from a Report on that subject made to a County Convention of Town Superintendents, assembled at Little Falls, N. Y., June 14, 1844:

While the importance and necessity of text books have been over-estimated by many, others have passed to the opposite extreme, and advanced the doctrine that these works may be dispensed with altogether. The latter of these errors will at present, I doubt not, be found in practice the greater evil. If all teachers were such thorough and accomplished masters as to supply promptly and correctly from their own resources, and at the same time, the office of text book and tutor, then would I cordially unite in an effort to discontinue all further discussion upon this vexed question, and lay all text books aside. But sanguine as I am in my anticipations of the onward course of educational reform, I do not expect to live to that time when all printed instructions for teachers can be dispensed with without detriment to the schools. It is a fallacy to suppose that what a few perfect masters can achieve, may be readily attained by all who will be employed to teach. Text books will be found, for many years to come, eminently useful; and the author of good ones, and the individual who aids in placing them in the schools, are engaged in worthy and patriotic labors.

It cannot be reasonably expected that any recommendation that can be made will be universally approved. The subject is one respecting which there is necessarily considerable diversity of opinion. Few, if any, books have yet reached the greatest perfection; besides, authors, publishers, and booksellers, naturally enough persuade themselves that the works in which they are interested are preferable to their competitors. Still, by the application of some general principles, a harmony of opinion will be developed to a greater extent than would at first view seem possible.

It is now commonly agreed, that knowledge in every department of study is acquired by regular progression, and that every science naturally unfolds itself in conformity to fixed and invariable laws. The proper test, therefore, to be applied to a text book, is the simple inquiry whether it is accurate in its definitions of principles, and conformed in its arrangement to this established order. The test is simple, and its application is less difficult than many suppose.

I do not profess to have applied this test, patiently and accurately, to all the works I am about to recommend, so that I can pronounce with certainty respecting them. I am guided in reference to many of them by public opinion.

To indicate the order in which text books are to be used, I cite the following extract from the published instructions of the State Superintendent:—"The usual order has been found by long experience to be best, namely, the alphabet, spelling, reading with definitions, arithmetic, geography, history, and grammar."

In conformity to this order, a spelling book is the first one to be used in our schools. Numerous works of this kind are before the public, and each is recommended by some individual excellence; but I regard Cobb's New Spelling Book as decidedly the best work of its kind for learning the orthography of our language. It is far more extensive in its tables, and more accurate in its classification; while the numerous anomalies with which our spelling abounds, are so clearly pointed out as greatly to assist the pupils in mastering them. It is fast gaining in popularity, and wherever it has been duly examined and compared with other works, so far as I am informed, a general preference has been expressed for it.

Of the importance of spelling, the State Superintendent has expressed the following opinions. In his published instructions to County Superintendents he says: "They should urge the absolute necessity of children being thoroughly and frequently exercised in spelling, so that they may make no mistakes in any words in common use. Without this it is impossible for them to become good readers." These views are evidently the result of accurate observation and long experience, and cannot be too often repeated.

The prominent defects in our reading exercises in the common schools are, a bad articulation, and almost universal neglect of definitions. As a corrective for the former of these errors, I would recommend the introduction and use of Comstock's Works; and to correct the latter, I recommend the use of Cobb's New Series of Readers.

The Phonetic Reader, Elocution, and Charts of Elementary Sounds, by Andrew Comstock, M. D.—The author of these works has spent twenty years in the study of the subjects of which they treat, and is probably the best known and the most successful practical elocutionist in the country. He was the first to arrange in tabular and systematic forms, the elements of our language; and most, if not all, of the numerous phonological charts which have appeared, are essentially transcripts from, though not improvements of this author's works. In their latest editions, Comstock's books and charts are, beyond question, unsurpassed by any thing of their kind which has yet been offered the public. Besides the great facilities which they afford for habits of correct, elegant, and effective reading and speaking, they present also, in graceful and attractive forms, many of those fundamental moral and political truths, on the right apprehension and practical application of which, by the mass of our people, depend the support and perpetuity of our free institutions. They also contemplate a thorough reformation in our anomalous and barbarous orthography.

The leading characteristics of Cobb's Series of Readers are thus briefly stated in a report of the Association of Teachers of the Public Schools in the city of New York, dated February 17, 1844: "Every word used is accented, pronounced, and defined once in the course of the Series. The lessons and books are also graduated from easy to more difficult, and every new word is defined in the spelling lesson immediately preceding the reading lesson in which it occurs. The particular definition applicable in the lesson is printed in italics, that the learner may thus ascertain

the exact meaning of every word he reads. The selections are from various authors, chiefly American, carefully avoiding all frightful and impossible stories, and colloquies of inferior animals, such as nourish an appetite for fiction and romance. Such are the leading characteristics of Mr. Cobb's books, which the Association warmly recommend to their brother teachers."

Throughout Cobb's whole Series of New Readers, teachers and pupils are constantly reminded of the capital error in reading exercises, *neglect of definitions*, and are, at the same time, afforded great facilities for its correction. Were this Series in all other respects only equal with others, this single excellence, in my judgment, is so great and commanding that it should determine the public in favor of their general use in the schools of the country.

The Bible Reader, by Wm. B. Fowle, of Boston, is a choice selection of admirable reading lessons from the Holy Scriptures. This book was compiled with special reference to the wants of the schools, and it is so perfectly adapted to fill the place its author designed it to occupy, that to be universally approved it needs only to be universally known. For a reading book it is, in my opinion, far better than the entire Scriptures of either the Old or New Testament; and I cordially recommend its immediate adoption and use in all the Common Schools of this county.

History, particularly that of our own country, may be made a most interesting and profitable portion of Common School exercises. Geography and Chronology are indispensable in the acquisition of historical knowledge, and should always be taught in connection with it. No adequate conception of any action can be formed in the mind of a child without connecting with it the *place where*, and the *time when*, it occurred: Geography and Chronology have long since been properly denominated the two eyes of history. Memory will be taxed in vain to recall impressions made by historical narration, unless the ideas of time and place are associated with those impressions. History may also, and should be, a medium for awakening a love of country, and inspiring the young with virtuous and heroic sentiments. Mrs. Willard's Abridgment of her History of the United States is better adapted to answer all these desirable ends than any other small manual with which I am acquainted; while as a book for reading purposes it is unsurpassed by any that can be produced in the form of historical narration. I hope soon to see this little manual in general use in our schools.

Porter's Rhetorical Reader and Vandenhoff's Plain System of Elocution give the best explanation and illustration of the principles of good reading of any books within my knowledge. They are standard works of their kind, and ought to be read and studied by all teachers and the advanced classes in the schools.

Wickham's Educational Incentives may be made very useful instrumentalities in primary and common Schools; and I cheerfully commend them to the favorable regard of the friends of Education.

Sweet's Elocution is a judicious selection of exercises in reading and speaking, and well adapted for occasional use in reading and declamation.

by the higher classes. The author's numerous notes, explanatory and historical, will be found entertaining and instructive.

Hart's Class Books of Poetry and Prose are intended to show the progress of the English Language from its rude condition, several centuries ago, to its present cultivated and polished state. The conception is an admirable one, and the work has been well executed. These books will be found both entertaining and instructive.

Worcester's Comprehensive Dictionary is believed to be the best adapted of any work of its kind for the use of the Common Schools. This Dictionary is in the octavo form, and will therefore be found more convenient for use and more durable than the ordinary small dictionaries. It contains a greater number of words, and more full and accurate definitions; it gives the authorities on each side, wherever a word of disputed pronunciation occurs; it explains many of those Latin, French, Italian, and Spanish words and phrases so often used in newspapers, pamphlets, and magazines, and which must be wholly unintelligible to the common reader without some similar help; it contains Walker's catalogue of Greek and Latin proper names, divided, accented, and pronounced; the same author's catalogue of Scripture proper names; and lastly, a list of several thousands of geographical proper names, many of them the most difficult to pronounce of any words in the language, and such as cannot be correctly pronounced even by most teachers without some aid of this kind. Taken as a whole, this Dictionary is far preferable, for private families and Common Schools, to any other work with which I am acquainted; and I have long urged its adoption in all the schools under my supervision. I hope, also, that it will be adopted throughout the State.

Oswald's Etymological Dictionary I think would be found a useful book in a teacher's library, and I would respectfully recommend it to the favorable notice of all persons who wish to become acquainted with the origin of great numbers of words now in common use.

For extensive and accurate definitions, Doct. Webster's American Dictionary of the English language is by common consent allowed to be the best work that has yet been written. Every teacher should regard his private library as capitally defective until it contains this work. The octavo edition in two volumes contains the Doctor's latest versions and amendments.

McElligott's Manual Analytical and Synthetical of Orthography and Definition appears to me as a most comprehensive and valuable work. It is designed to follow the Spelling-book, and the following is a brief outline of its plan. It requires each exercise to be written; it renders necessary a due application of the Rules of Spelling; it obliges the student to compare words variously related one with another; it resolves derivatives, as also their compounds, into their elements; explains the parts both separately and in combination, and thus evolves their literal or primary meanings,—going beyond this especially in relation to those derivatives that admit a number of prefixes; it points out the connection between the primary and the other significations, and so trains the mind to habits of accuracy and logical deduction, and offers, as might thence be inferred, the best possible substitute for the formal and regular study of the Classics.

Brown's and Bullion's Grammars of our language, are the most popular works of their kind in use in the schools of this State. Both are recom-

mended by high testimonials. I have not made that general comparison and thorough examination that would be necessary to warrant me in expressing a preference for either. I therefore call the attention of teachers and trustees to both, and leave to them to decide which is preferable for the use of schools.

Webster's Philosophical Grammar, Pierce's Grammar, Hazen's Grammar, and many others, may be read with interest and profit by teachers; each will furnish some useful hints to the inquirer, and, to some extent, aid in bringing to order that grammatical chaos which has been so long a source of perplexity to teachers, and of discouragement to learners. A thorough practical acquaintance with the language of one's country and race is of all departments of knowledge the most useful; and whoever contributes even but a mite to render the acquisition of such knowledge more easy, has some just claim to be regarded as a public benefactor.

Mitchel's Geographical Series is, as a whole, believed to be the most complete and valuable of any thing of its kind. Its circulation, already great, is constantly and rapidly increasing. Take this series, in connection with the outline maps designed to accompany it, and they afford the learner the greatest facilities for becoming thoroughly and practically acquainted with this most interesting department of study. The Outline Maps, though the first things of their kind offered to the public, are, by far the greater number of persons, still regarded as the best. They ought to be placed in every school-house in the Union.

The subject of Natural Philosophy, so intimately connected with Agriculture, Mechanics, Manufactures, and the Arts, possessing in its elements a charm which never fails to attract and fix the attention of children, —in its higher departments, an interest so great and absorbing as to hold in willing and delightful captivity the most mature powers of thought, and, in its whole influence upon the intellect and heart, so eminently conservative to the formation of a pure and elevated moral character, ought ever to occupy a prominent place in every institution for popular education. In this interesting and healthful department of science, it is confidently believed that the series of text books which have been, with great labor and care, prepared by Professor Olmsted, of Yale College, is better adapted to direct and aid the studies both of the beginner and of the advanced student, than any other which has yet been offered to the public. The series consists of the Rudiments, School Philosophy, and School Astronomy, in one small volume each, and the College Philosophy and College Astronomy, in one large octavo each. The same author's Letters on Astronomy constitute a volume of most delightful reading, which ought to find a place in every private, social, and school library in the country.

The First Lessons and Common School Arithmetic of Prof. Davies, together with the University Arithmetic, form a common-school series of unrivalled excellence. They are too well known, and too highly appreciated, to render any commendation necessary. The whole system of Davies' Mathematics, including his elementary and higher works, are extensively used throughout the Union, and their circulation is constantly increasing.

Preston's Book-keeping. For beginners, the Primary—classes more advanced, the larger work.

The Rudiments of Political Science are now very properly and generally becoming a department of study in the common schools, and various text books, prepared by different authors, are now before the public. The book which has been most extensively introduced into the different counties of this state, is Young's First Lessons in Government. Hurlburt's Civil Office, Shurtleff's Governmental Instructor, Hart's Class Book of the Constitution, Wilson's Civil Polity, and Wedgewood's Revised Statutes, may all be read and studied with advantage by most teachers and pupils.

The Child's First Book of Reading and Drawing, by Jerome B. Howard, Teacher of Drawing in the New York State Normal School, is a little volume just published by Gates & Steadman, 136 Nassau st., N. Y. It gives fair promise of being a meritorious and useful work, and it is hereby respectfully commended to the favorable notice of Teachers.

COMMON SCHOOL APPARATUS.

By the 16th section of the act of 1843, it is provided that "whenever the number of volumes in the district library of any district numbering over fifty children between the ages of five and sixteen years, shall exceed one hundred and twenty-five; or of any district numbering fifty children or less, between the ages of five and sixteen years, shall exceed one hundred volumes, the inhabitants of the district qualified to vote therein, *may, at a special meeting, duly notified for that purpose*, by a majority of votes, appropriate the whole or any part of library money belonging to the district, for the current year, to the purchase of *maps, globes, black-boards, or other scientific apparatus, for the use of the school.*

¶ "The Library money of every district must be expended for Books or Apparatus on or before the first day of October in each year."—Common School System; by S. S. Randall, page 140.

The increased employment of the *eye* in the business of instruction, is one of the greatest improvements of our times. The eye seems to have been designed by the Creator as the great medium for the reception of knowledge in the earlier stages of life. How pleasantly, distinctly, and durably, may many of the most important principles of science be impressed upon the mind by a picture, a diagram, or a piece of mechanism, which, by mere oral instruction, the teacher would labor in vain to produce! Wisely therefore has the Legislature made provision for introducing apparatus into all the common schools.

The following specimens of apparatus are believed to be the best in their respective departments, and are therefore cordially recommended as worthy of being placed in all the common schools of the state and country:

IN THE ELEMENTARY SOUNDS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE, &c.

Comstock's Phonological Charts, viz.:—A CHART comprising—*first*, the Elementary Sounds of the English language, philosophically arranged—*second*, numerous cuts showing the best posture of the mouth in the energetic utterance of the Elements—*third*, exercises in Articulation and Gesture—*fourth*, a Phonetic Alphabet of the English Language, in which there is a letter (typic and graphic) appropriated to every elementary sound.

A CHART comprising exercises in Force and Pitch, embracing Melody and Modulation.

IN GEOGRAPHY AND ASTRONOMY.

Mitchel's Outline Maps and Key, \$15.00. Too well known to need any description.

Mitchel's Map of New York, \$2.50.

Vale's Globe and Transparent Sphere. Prices of the above instrument from \$12 to \$150. Size adapted to private families and common schools from \$24 to \$30—case and packing extra.

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This rule requires me to believe that my parents and teachers know the things that I ought to do, and the way in which they ought to be done, better than I do. I cannot, therefore, be a good child or a good scholar unless my obedience to my parents and teachers is prompt and cheerful.

VII. I MUST DO TO OTHERS AS I WOULD HAVE OTHERS DO TO ME.

This rule requires me to be just, true, and kind. I must never do any act to another that under the same circumstances I would not willingly have done to me. This is the most perfect rule for regulating our actions towards each other, and no person can be either good or honorable who does not strive to observe this rule.

VIII. I MUST ALWAYS SPEAK THE TRUTH.

This rule forbids me ever to misrepresent or conceal any thing which others have a right to know. It requires me, on all occasions, to speak

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